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MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
LIFE, WRITINGS, AND CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
WILLIAM SMELLIE.  
VOLUME SECOND.





Mr Smellie's Hand Writing.

I have the honour to be  
My Lord,  
Your Lordship's most obliged  
and most respectful humble Servt  
William Smellie

Hand Writing of M. de Buffon.

Votre très humble et très  
obéissant serviteur  
M. de Buffon

Hand Writing of Lord Hailes.

Jan Sir your most obliged  
Humble servant  
Bar. Dalrymple

Queries by Mr Smellie on a Proof Sheet of the Elements of Criticism  
with answers by Lord Kames in his own Hand Writing.

× Please consider whether attract from  
be proper. Attract to is more usual.  
I have altered it to please you.

× Should it not be either distractes,  
or distracteth, to make both alike?  
I think so. But you are extremely nice

MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
LIFE,  
WRITINGS, & CORRESPONDENCE

OF  
WILLIAM SMELLIE,

F. R. S. & F. A. S.

LATE PRINTER IN EDINBURGH,  
SECRETARY AND SUPERINTENDANT OF NATURAL HISTORY TO THE  
SOCIETY OF SCOTISH ANTIQUARIES, &c.

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BY ROBERT KERR, F. R. S. & F. A. S. Ed.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOLUME SECOND.

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EDINBURGH:  
PRINTED FOR JOHN ANDERSON; &  
AND  
LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, & BROWN, LONDON.  
*Alex. Smellie, Printer.*

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1811.



MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
LIFE, WRITINGS, AND CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
WILLIAM SMELLIE.

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ON the failure of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, of which an account has been given at the close of the former volume, Dr STUART went again to London, and engaged in the Political Herald and English Review, in the employment of Mr JOHN MURRAY, a very respectable bookseller in London, formerly mentioned. He conducted both of these works with much spirit and strong talents, but with his accustomed keen severity. Continuing his usual dissipation, he at length became dropsical, and was obliged to give up his literary labours at London.

VOL. II. A

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He returned to Scotland, in the slight hope of being benefited by his native air, and took up his residence in his fathers house at Musselburgh; where, a short time before his death, his medical attendants deemed it advisable to relieve him temporarily from the oppressive effects of the dropsy, by the operation of tapping. Even in this latter scene of his life, at which Mr SMELLIE was present, who related the circumstance to his son Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE, Dr STUART evinced his keen inveteracy against Dr ROBERTSON in a very singular manner. He entreated the assistants at the operation, to bottle up the fluid they were then draining from his abdomen, that it might be sent to the Principal, to use as a purge. Dr STUART soon after died, in 1786, aged only forty-four.

BESIDES his juvenile performance already mentioned, and the share he took in the Monthly Review, Edinburgh Magazine and Review, Political Herald, and English Review, which have all been adverted to, Dr STUART published, 1. A View of Society in Europe; 2. Observations concerning the Public Law and Constitution of Scotland;

3. The History of the Reformation in Scotland; and, 4. The History of Scotland, from the Reformation to the Death of Queen MARY.

## No. LXXXIV.

*Dr GILBERT STUART to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR BILL,

IF you will send me the 2d volume of Lord KAMESES Sketches, in which there are some good remarks on the management of boroughs, I will fit out CAYS paper for this number \*.

IN a work by JONATHAN EDWARDS, called 'The History of the Work of Redemption', there is a most curious fanatical page on the peopling of America, which will afford a column of excellent food for the Magazine department. The book you will easily get, as DICKSON will give it to you for half a day.

\* Alluding to an intended article for the Edinburgh Magazine and Review.

I could wish you to give it a whipping ; see p. 295 ; or rather send the book out to me, and I will adorn the passage by a note or two\*. It will attract the General Assembly.

LEST there be a defalcation of review, send me HARRY HUNTER'S Sermon ; or, if you chuse it better, draw up a short account of it yourself ; but not too flattering. I hope you have reviewed CRAIG.

I AM angry, and sorry at the same time, for the West Kirk. But I cannot possibly allow myself to think that the Solicitor will begin his political career with trifling like a boy.

GIVE the inclosed to CAY as soon as you see him. The inclosed review by our friend is truly good criticism and good sense ; let it be the first article. I am, &c.

•

GILBERT STUART.

\* Dr STUART accordingly did 'adorn the passage' with a few precious notes ; but these Mr SMELLIE very prudently left out, from the account of this publication in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review.

## No. LXXXV.

Dr GILBERT STUART to Mr WILLIAM  
SMELLIE.

DEAR BILL,

No date.

I HAVE scarce time to write. The inclosed is to Dr BLACKLOCK. You may return an answer to *Philo-Bib.* that his paper will appear ; and that the Editors have no more respect for the papers he opposes than for his own : And that he alludes to a *bias*, as the source of its not being inserted, which is certainly inexcusable in a periodical work, and which will not apply to the Edinburgh Magazine and Review.

CULLENS letter requests the return of MADOXES *Firma Burgi*, a thin folio, which I thought you had given him. I beg and intreat that you will look it out : Mrs DUNCAN will give you both the keys.

LET CREECH and you consult fully, and then write me. If there is any news more

about Dance and the Magistrates, let us hear by the coach. I do not wish that CREECH and you should lose money; and I think neither you nor he should wish that I should lose time. CULLEN also writes that he had sent a review of CRAIG, which please send. Yours, &c.

G. STUART.

## No. LXXXVI.

*Dr GILBERT STUART to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR BILL,

*No date.*

I BEG that CREECH and you may have some communing about the fate of the Magazine, as I am no longer to have any concern with it. I do not mean to write any thing for it, after the present volume is finished; and I fancy the next is the last number of the third volume. I have another view of disposing of my time, and I fancy it will almost wholly be taken up; the sooner, therefore, that I am informed of your resolutions the better. \* \* \* \* \*

Yours, &c.

G. STUART.

THERE is no date to this letter, but it must have been in or about June 1775, from the circumstance respecting the last number of the 3d volume of the Magazine, mentioned in the letter, as the last number of volume III. was for June of that year. Yet, notwithstanding this declaration, that he was to write no more for the Edinburgh Magazine and Review after the close of the third volume in June 1775, he assuredly continued to write for the fourth and fifth volumes; and the last portion of his review of the Origin and Progress of Language, which gave so much offence, appeared so late as that number of the *fifth* volume which was published in June 1776.

## No. LXXXVII.

*From Dr GILBERT STUART to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR BILL,

*No date.*

I DID not get your letter till late yesterday, though it is dated on Monday. The preface will do very well, and appears to me

to be very correct ; but a few amendments occurred to me, and are on the margin.

SEND me a reading of your translation to-day or to-morrow ; as I will now have little to do in a week or two. Yours ever entirely,

*Wednesday.*

**GILBERT STUART.**

### No. LXXXVIII.

*To Dr GILBERT STUART from \*\*\*\*\*.*

DEAR STUART, *Broughton, 22d May 1775.*

I RECEIVED yours this morning, and did all in my power to persuade SMELLIE to print your friends monumental inscription ; but, alas ! my oratory was all thrown away ; nor can I conceive how it will be possible to get it done. I again beg to meet you here : If you could come to-morrow or Wednesday, you and I in conjunction might stand a chance to overcome his scruples. You exhibit a most remarkable instance of good nature, in taking so much pains to alter another mans favourite production for the press.

As to me, I own I think it a religious duty to perpetuate the memory of the \*\*\*\*\* \*; and, that it may be properly done, I again beg to meet with you in *Auld Reiky*. Now to other business.

I HAVE read the incomprehensible paper you sent inclosed, and agree with you that it is an enigma I am not Oedipus enough to resolve: But I am greatly inclined to have it published, was it only to observe the interpretation put upon it by the R——s, and the effect it may produce, which I prophecy will be amusing to the last degree. Our friend, who is so squeamish about the other, is so fond of it, that he has made me promise to leave it with him to-night. I suppose he is apprehensive that, if I return it to you, he may be deprived of it for the first of June. I shall give you any observations that occur *obiter*, which, if you have a copy, you may consider at your leisure \*.

AGAIN I beg to see you here in time to persuade SMELLIE to do what you want,

\* These critical observations upon an unknown production, as they would necessarily be unintelligible, are omitted.

which I really believe is in your power, though not in mine. I am, &c.

\*\*\*\*\*

### No. LXXXIX.

*The Reverend J. LOGAN to Dr G. STUART.*

DEAR SIR, Leith, 8th March 1783.

THE new Review published by Mr MURRAY hath never reached this place; so that it hath excited, without gratifying, our curiosity. I wish it success, as I do to every undertaking that tends to the progress and improvement of literature.

THIS is the season when, if you will indulge me in a pun, the leaf begins to appear. Dr FERGUSONS Roman History has been advertised. The pomp and glitter,—the point and antithesis,—and all the tawdry and meretricious ornaments, which mark and disgrace some popular historians, he avoids and disdains. He writes history with the simplicity and dignity of an old Roman. The public, however, will discover that his manly

ease of writing is as different from the colloquial cant of such a vulgar scribbler as \_\_\_\_\_, as the robe of a rustic Dictator is from the garb of an ordinary ploughman.

DR BLAIRS Lectures are also to be published some time in spring. I need not tell you that I am very much interested in the fate and fame of all his works. He hath, I confess, one deplorable fault. From inveterate and incurable habits, he is too much connected with a literary \_\_\_\_\_, whom you have completely stripped of his borrowed plumes. But, at his time of life, the grand climacteric, it is hardly worth while to change ones acquaintances. In every other respect, he is very deservedly a favourite of the public. Besides his literary merit, *he hath borne his faculties so meekly* in every situation, that he is entitled to favour as well as candour. He has never, with pedantic authority, opposed the career of other authors; but has, on the contrary, favoured every literary attempt. He has never studied to push himself immaturely into the notice of the world, but waited the call of the public for all his productions; and now, when he retires from the republic of letters into the vale of ease, I can-

not help wishing success to **FINGAL** in the last of his fields.

In any work where you are concerned, if you happen to be employed by greater objects, I shall very gladly write any short article that you may have occasion for with regard to him. Your influence to give Dr **BLAIR** his last passport to the public will be very agreeable to the literati here, and will be a particular favour done to me. It will still farther enhance the obligation, if you will write me such a letter as I can show him, *to quiet his fears*. Wishing you success in all your literary undertakings, I am ever, &c.

J. LOGAN.

THOUGH not connected in time or circumstances with the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, the following letter from Mr **GEORGE STUART**, the father of Dr **GILBERT**, and, at the time it was written, emeritus Professor of Humanity in the University of Edinburgh, has been thought worthy of insertion. Mr **STUART** was ably succeeded in the humanity chair by the late learned and respectable Professor **JOHN HILL**.

## No. XC.

*Mr GEORGE STUART to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR,                   *Fisherrow, 28. Nov. 1791.*

I AM very glad to hear that you are so busy: Long may it continue. I expected to have seen the proof sheets and dedication of Mr SIMSONS Theses on Saturday night; but it seems they are not yet finished. I am anxious, both on the printers and authors account, as you well know that a false letter or ill-placed point mar the sense; and as I would wish that the young gentleman, whom I have a great regard for, may appear to the best advantage; when you send him the papers, send this note along with them; and, as his servant can come out with them, it will not in the least delay the distribution of his Theses, as he cannot put on the gown till Tuesday next week. I shall not detain them ten minutes. I wish the dedication printed like Mr FERGUSONS. I am as ever, &c.

G. STUART.

THE late worthy and ingenious **Dr THOMAS BLACKLOCK**, who was one of the writers in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review, lived in the most intimate habits of friendship with **MR SMELLIE**, all of whose children he baptized. Though blind from his early infancy, he was an excellent scholar, a good poet and musician, and a most respectable and amiable man. **Dr BLACKLOCK** was the son of a tradesman in the town of Annan in Dumfries-shire, where he was born in 1721. He lost his sight by the small-pox in infancy; yet some of his poetical works contain elegant and natural descriptions of various objects, for which his muse must have been indebted entirely to the exertions of taste and memory in his study of the works of other poets. Although in narrow circumstances, his father bestowed upon him a good education, in which, notwithstanding his peculiarly discouraging situation, he made great progress. On the death of his father in 1740, he was placed at the University of Edinburgh for the prosecution of his studies, through the liberal patronage of **Dr STEPHENSON**, a respectable physician of that city; and he there acquired great proficiency in classical learning, and in the philosophical branches of education usually

pursued as preparatory for entering into holy orders, as he proposed to devote himself to the ministry in the Church of Scotland. In the year 1745, he retired into the country; and soon afterwards published at Glasgow a small volume of poems of his own composition. A second edition of these poems, with some additions, was published in quarto at Edinburgh in 1754, to which a short biographical memoir was prefixed, written by a gentleman of the name of SPENCE. It would appear that the interval of nine years, between these two editions of his poems, had been occupied in the country in private tuition.

FROM the profits of this quarto edition of his poems, he was enabled to resume his studies at the University, when he devoted his attention particularly to theology. About the year 1760, he was admitted into the ministry of the Church of Scotland, and was soon afterwards presented to a country living; but the lower order of the people in the parish to which he was appointed entertained some strange but deep-rooted aversion to the idea of having a blind pastor, and opposed him with such barbarous violence as even to put his life in imminent hazard. His forti-

tude was unable to bear up against this opposition, and he resigned the charge to which he had been presented.

In the Edinburgh Magazine and Review for July 1774, there is a short account of *The Graham*, an heroic ballad, composed by Dr BLACKLOCK, and then recently published. In that critical notification, which was written by Dr STUART, there is the following elegant compliment to the author. “ Under disadvantages which seem insurmountable to nature, Dr BLACKLOCK has eminently distinguished himself. Though blind from his infancy, the impulse of curiosity and the vigorous exertion of his talents have conducted him to uncommon knowledge. There is no science with which he is not acquainted : he is familiar with the learned languages ; and he knows with accuracy those of modern Europe that are the most cultivated. Among philosophers he has obtained a conspicuous rank by his book on *Consolations*\* ; and, as a poet, he will ever be celebrated for what could least have been expected from him,—the live-

\* *Paraclesis, or Consolations deduced from Natural and Revealed Religion.*

liness of imagery, and the splendour of description. But while, in this short notice, we have faintly endeavoured to do some justice to its merit, we reflect with anxiety and sorrow, that, to use the authors own words in the prefixed advertisement, ‘ it was begun and pursued by its author, to divert wakeful and melancholy hours, which the recollection of past misfortunes, and the sense of present inconveniences, would otherwise have severely embittered.’ And, let it be remembered, to the disgrace of our country and our age, that this learned, this accomplished, this virtuous man, this son of genius, was driven out of the church by a pestilent faction ; and, under the gloom of darkness, and the pressure of years, was cruelly necessitated to struggle anew in the toils of life, and to pay his devotions at the shrine of Fortune, the most capricious of all goddesses ! ”

AFTER this severe disappointment in his views of a respectable establishment in life, Dr BLACKLOCK again retired to Edinburgh, where he devoted himself to private tuition, and long kept a most respectable boarding-house for students attending the University ; in the management of which he was aided by

Mrs BLACKLOCK, his most worthy, attentive, and affectionate wife. In 1766, he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity; and died in 1791, aged 70, universally beloved and regretted by all who knew his worth and talents. Besides his miscellaneous poems and some other fugitive pieces, Dr BLACKLOCK published a work entitled *Paraclesis, or Consolations deduced from Natural and Revealed Religion*, in one volume octavo; *Two Discourses on the Spirit and Evidences of Christianity*, translated from the French, in octavo; *The Graham*, an heroic ballad, in four cantos, quarto; and *Remarks on Civil Liberty*, in octavo.

It will be seen by the subsequent remnant of correspondence between him and Mr SMELLIE, that in 1790, a short while before his death, Dr BLACKLOCK proposed to have translated and published a very curious work on the Education of the Blind, written in French by Abbé HAÜY, and printed and bound by the blind pupils at the *Quinze-vingts* in Paris, a benevolent institution, which owed its establishment to the late unfortunate Louis XVI. The types of that work, as published at Paris, were made to impress the paper

so strongly as to produce palpable letters in such high relief that blind people, properly instructed, might read them by means of their fingers. In the course of translating this work, Dr BLACKLOCK encountered some technical difficulties connected with a description of the typographical art, with which the Doctor was unacquainted. On this occasion, he made application for assistance from his friend Mr SMELLIE, which was readily and immediately complied with; as Mr SMELLIE sent for the book, and returned it in a very short time to Dr BLACKLOCK, with an accurate translation of the whole chapter which described the typographical labours of the blind pupils, and the ingenious contrivances for enabling themselves, and others in the same unhappy predicament, to enjoy the benefit and delight of solitary reading. The increasing infirmities, however, of the worthy Doctor obliged him to desist from this last literary exertion, which he left in manuscript unfinished at his death. If this manuscript could be recovered, it might perhaps be worth while to publish the work, for the benefit of the Asylum for Industrious Blind at Edinburgh,—an excellent institution, worthy of the benevolent divine, the Rev. Dr DAVID

JOUNSTON, minister of North Leith, to whose exertions it owes its establishment and success.

It has been already mentioned, that Dr BLACKLOCK contributed his assistance in the conduct of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review; on which account chiefly the foregoing short biographical sketch has been introduced into these Memoirs. Among Mr SMELLIES papers some fragments remain of the correspondence which took place during the long intimacy which subsisted between him and Dr BLACKLOCK, which we have deemed worthy of being preserved. From the first of these, it would appear that Mr SMELLIE had applied to the Doctor to draw up a review of some recent poetical performance, for insertion in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review. From another of these letters, it would appear that Mr SMELLIE had sent Dr BLACKLOCK the Prospectus to the first volume of his Philosophy of Natural History, a proof of which he had submitted for his perusal and criticism. In some of these letters, the Doctor has assumed the feigned signature of COSMOPHILUS, instead of causing his own name to be subscribed by his amanuensis; the par-

ticular reason for which we are unacquainted with.

## No. XCI.

*From Dr THOMAS BLACKLOCK to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR,      *Edinburgh, 25th May 1775.*

I WAS sorry not to be able immediately to answer your card; but it was out of my power. Whatever inclination I might have to review the poem which you mention, yet, as I neither knew the author to be *chastised*, nor had seen the performance itself, it was impossible for me to say any thing against it, without the hazard of exposing myself either to censure or ridicule. Indeed, for the future, I am almost resolved never to write any thing but what is extorted from me by the indispensible necessity of my private affairs, as it is attended by so many inconveniences, and so little success. But though I should be no longer considered as your assistant, you may still regard me as your sub-

scriber, for which punctual payment may be expected, when the numbers are regularly sent me, from yours, &c.

THOMAS BLACKLOCK.

No. XCII.

*From Dr THOMAS BLACKLOCK to Mr WIL-  
LIAM SMELLIE.*

*Edinburgh, 29th March 1782.*

MY GOOD OLD FRIEND,

You may think it odd, nay, perhaps incredible, if you should be told that, far from having it in my power to call upon you, I have for some days attempted in vain to snatch an opportunity of writing to you; yet this is literally true, though I confess I should rather have wished an interview between us; because, in conversation, one can manage matters with much more ease, freedom, and dispatch, than upon paper. I have this moment received a card from the Antiquarian Society, informing me that their next meeting is upon the 2d, which, from the enunciation of their President, I did not expect to happen till the 5th.

of April. I had some time before sent them a present from Mr M'KINNON of his book, with a hint of his inclination to be elected an honorary member. His distant residence, and unfrequent visits to Edinburgh, will prevent his being troublesome to the Society, though he neither wants power nor spirit to do it occasional services: If, therefore, either in a public or private capacity, your influence can facilitate his election, it may perhaps oblige him, without hurting yourself. This is not all:—Presently afterwards, in another letter addressed to the Secretary, I offered and sent him a present of my own two volumes: In the same letter I requested their permission to inscribe to them my Tutor to the Blind; and gave them a succinct account of its nature and contents. Now, I wished to be advised by you, whether I ought to be present or not at their first meeting, when that business may probably be discussed; or, if I am absent, you will oblige me by acquainting me what then passes. If I have leave to publish it under their sanction, as Mr CREECH is their bookseller, and was formerly offered the publication, I shall esteem it a favour if you will converse with him about it; or, if you have any objection to him, with any other of

the fraternity whom you please. But who-ever receives it, must receive it upon this express and indispensible condition, that you and you alone are to be employed in printing it. I am, dear Sir, truly and affectionately yours,

COSMOPHILUS.

No. XCIII.

*Dr THOMAS BLACKLOCK to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR, *No date.*

I HAVE read your prospectus, and find no essential fault with it, either in respect to the style or matter. You may, if you please, instead of the word *tyro* substitute *initiate*. There was a single word more, which I wished to see exchanged, but I have forgot it, nor is it of any importance. Upon the whole, the composition is elegant and judicious.

PLEASE to accept, for yourself and Mrs SMELLIE, the compliments of the season, from yours, &c.

COSMOPHILUS.

## No. XCIV.

*From Dr BLACKLOCK to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

*Monday morning.*

DR BLACKLOCK offers his best compliments to MR SMELLIE, and hopes he has now read the Essay on the Education of the Blind, because some gentlemen have asked to see it from the Doctor as a curiosity. It would be obliging, if MR SMELLIE could estimate the expence of publication, supposing the number of copies to be 500, in 8vo, with specimens of the palpable character. But if this should be difficult or troublesome, it is of less importance; because the Doctor has at present given up all thoughts of the translation, for some time at least, perhaps for ever.

## No. XCV.

*Dr THOMAS BLACKLOCK to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR,              *Edinburgh, Oct. 21. 1790.*

IN my last card, I insinuated to you that it was my intention to give up all thoughts of translating the essay on the Education of the Blind; but, being persuaded by friends to resume it, I proceeded as far as the fifth chapter. This to me has proved a *pons asinorum*, as it entirely consists in a technical detail of the manner in which the blind have been taught the manoeuvres and practice of printing. This, you see, will be unintelligible to every one by whom the art itself is not understood. I cannot expect that a person so necessarily and constantly employed as you are, should translate the chapter for me; though perhaps this would not alienate an hour of your time from more important occupations; but, will you have the goodness to come over and explain it with me of an evening, when you return from bu-

siness? Once you were kind and obliging. I shall not easily forget the honest ebullitions of a humane heart which I have seen you discover. How I have deserved to lose your favour, if indeed I have lost it, is to me an impenetrable secret; this only I know, that, though our intercourse has been unfrequent, I still remain with equal warmth and attachment, your sincere friend,

THOMAS BLACKLOCK.

No. XCVI.

*Dr THOMAS BLACKLOCK to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR,

*No date\*.*

I WOULD have sent you this much earlier, but have been indisposed ever since I saw you; and, what is worse, my malady was the native result of our late indulgence; though I think you must admit that it was neither luxurious nor intemperate. It is mortifying not to be able to enjoy ones self, however moderately, for an hour with impu-

\* It must, however, have been towards the end of 1790, of which date a letter on the same subject immediately precedes this.

nity ; but debility is the concomitant of age ; and I must submit in silence, and, alas ! in darkness ! The book, which ought to have been the subject of this letter, will perhaps be a volume which may sell at five shillings, though I cannot absolutely answer for its size. It contains,

1. THE history and catastrophe of a blind man ; intended to excite the public curiosity, and to fix the general attention on the miseries implied in that unhappy situation.

2. An account of the *Quinze Vingts*, an hospital erected at Paris by royal donation, for the subsistence and improvement of the blind.

3. An account of the various improvements of which the blind appear susceptible, and of the manner in which their talents may be cultivated, in order to render them happy in themselves, and useful to others.

THE rest of the work consists of independant essays, upon the different topics which had only been hinted at in the plan for educating the blind ; and are as follow :

4. On the advantages of a classical education.

5. On the nature and elements of speech, as common to all languages.
6. On Logic.
7. On Rhetoric.
8. On Metaphysics.
9. On Manners, or what the world now calls Politeness.
10. On practical Morality.

*Lastly*, An Appendix, consisting of letters, chiefly between the author and a dignified clergyman in the church of England, concerning the Immanuel Hospital, and other subjects relative to the blind.

HAD not my honour been now engaged to the Antiquarian Society, I know not how far despondency might have prevailed with me, for I shall have most of the essays to revise, which I intend to perform with care and deliberation, during the progress of my impression. It is a disagreeable task; but, if I can rescue one blind man from solitude, obscurity, and dependance; if it can put him in a way of receiving and communicating happiness, a reward more substantial and acceptable than opulence can bestow, will accrue to yours,

THOMAS BLACKLOCK.

THE following Latin note is believed to have been written by Dr BLACKLOCK ; that is, from his dictation ; and has this singular address : “ To Mr SMELLIE and Company, at the Three Oyster Cellars.” The meaning of this address is no farther intelligible than that an *oyster cellar* is, or rather was, the Edinburgh name for an oyster tavern. It seems to have contained some hidden humour of the day, understood by the parties ; perhaps merely an apology for not keeping an appointment, because carried off unexpectedly by a party of his young pupils to the house of a person named DUNBAR ; probably a tavern kept by a person of that name.

## No. XCVII.

Vix perlegeram tuas epistolas et ad futurum promiseram, cum juvenes aliquot numero circiter duodecim, viri audaces interfuerunt, et me nebulonem vehiculo sublatum fraude doloque clam rapuerunt, et in domicilio DUMBARENSI carceribus inclusum collocarunt.

Valeas.

*Literal Translation.*

I HAD scarcely read your epistle, and was considering of a reply, when about twelve bold young men interposed, and immediately seized helpless me, whom, by fraud and force, they placed in a vehicle, and conveyed me a prisoner to the dwelling of DUNBAR.

Farewell.

IN the year 1780, on the suggestion of the Earl of BUCHAN, a Society was instituted at Edinburgh for investigating and collecting the antiquities of Scotland. The proposal for this establishment was first submitted by that nobleman to a company of fourteen gentlemen, who met by invitation at his house in Edinburgh, on the 14th of November 1780. The following is the particular invitation from the Earl to Mr SMELLIE to attend this first meeting, at which the institution of the Society was proposed. There is no date in the original letter, but it must have been written a few days previous to the meeting.

## No XCVIII

*The Earl of BUCHAN To Mr WILLIAM  
SMELLIE.*

SIR,

HAVING for some years past meditated the promotion of a Society for the purpose of enquiring into the Antiquities of Scotland, and of comparing its ancient with its present state ; I have lately invited some gentlemen, who, I think, are friendly to such a plan, to meet in my house in St Andrews Square, on Tuesday the 14th current, at 7 o'clock in the evening, there and then to concert some measures with that view.

ALTHOUGH I very well know that your time is very usefully employed for the instruction of the Public, and that the investigation of the subject mentioned appears at first to be a little out of your *beat* ; yet, as it is meant to widen the field of enquiry to the pursuits connected with it, whether natural, moral, or political ; I beg leave, as a

mark of the very high and well founded opinion I have of your literary talents, to invite you to make one of us on the 14th, when I shall do myself the honour to mention the outlines of the plan I have in view. I am, &c.

BUCHAN.

To the meeting which Lord BUCHAN had thus convened on the 14th November 1780, his Lordship read a well drawn discourse, unfolding the nature, objects, and utility of the proposed Society. After conversing together upon the proposal, the meeting was adjourned to a future day; when, at this adjourned meeting, held likewise in his Lordships house, it was unanimously resolved to meet again on the 18th of December of that year; and on that day, they constituted themselves into a regular and permanent body, under the designation of the SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF SCOTLAND. It is not meant to give a history of that Society in this place, which has been already done in a separate publication by Mr SMELLIE; yet as one considerable portion of the strange and inexplicable opposition which was given by

two highly respectable public bodies to the grant of a Royal Charter to this Society, was occasioned by circumstances connected with Mr SMELLIE, some general account of this event seems called for in these Memoirs.

In December 1780, when the Society was first established, Mr SMELLIE was associated as one of the original members, and was appointed printer of their journals and transactions. In 1781, he was elected Keeper and Superintendent of the Museum of Natural History, which it was proposed should be collected by the Society, in addition to their intended cabinet of Scots antiquities. In 1782, Mr SMELLIE drew up an Account of the Institution and Progress of the Society; and in 1784, he wrote an extension or continuation of the same work, containing the circumstances of its progress to that second period, both of which were printed and published. In 1793, on the death of Mr JAMES CUMMING, who had been Secretary to the Society from its first establishment, Mr SMELLIE took prompt and judicious steps to preserve the many valuable articles belonging to the Society from dilapidation, and was soon afterwards elected into the vacant office of Secre-

tary : And, on Mr SMELLIES death in 1795, his son, Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE, was elected Secretary in his place, and still fills that office.

THE dissatisfaction which the late Dr WALKER, Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, expressed on occasion of Mr Smellie being permitted, by the Society of Scots Antiquaries, to read his projected Lectures on the Philosophy of Natural History in their hall, has been already noticed. This discontent was communicated to the Senatus Academicus of the University; and through that most respectable body, consisting of the Principal and all the Professors, an unexpected opposition arose in 1782, when the Society of Antiquaries transmitted a petition to the King, praying for a royal charter of incorporation. The Principal and Professors of the University presented a memorial to the Right Honourable HENRY DUNDAS, then Lord Advocate, now Lord MELVILLE, objecting to the grant of a royal charter to the Antiquaries, under the idea that Scotland was too narrow a country for two literary societies, and proposing that the King should incorporate a Society under the

name of the 'Royal Society of Scotland,' instead of granting a charter to the Scots Antiquaries. They alleged, that the Society of Antiquaries would intercept the communication of many specimens and objects of Natural History, which would otherwise be deposited in the museum of the University, and of many documents tending to illustrate the history, antiquities, and laws of Scotland, from being deposited in the library of the Faculty of Advocates. They likewise noticed, that the possession of a museum of Natural History might enable and induce the Society of Antiquaries to institute a lectureship of Natural History, in opposition to the professorship in the University.

THE Curators of the Advocates Library likewise wrote to the Lord Advocate, objecting to the grant of a charter to the Society of Antiquaries, under the idea that its institution might prove injurious to that magnificent library, by intercepting ancient manuscripts and monuments illustrative of the history and antiquities of Scotland, which would be more useful when collected into one repository than in a state of division.

THE Philosophical Society of Edinburgh presented a memorial at the same time to the Lord Advocate, in which they recommend themselves to his patronage for being included in the newly proposed Royal Society; but cautiously avoided saying any thing whatever respecting the Antiquarian Society.

To all these memorials, the Society of Antiquaries sent an elaborate answer, in form likewise of a memorial, to the Lord Advocate, in which the objections stated by the Professors of the University, and the Curators of the Advocates Library, were distinctly answered, and ably refuted. The whole of this controversy will be found in the second part of the Account of the Institution and Progress of the Society of Antiquaries in Scotland; but one paragraph of this last-mentioned memorial, as particularly connected with Mr SMELLIE, requires to be here inserted.

“ THE fact, with regard to a lecturer on Natural History, is not fully explained in the University memorial. About twelve months ago, a member of the Antiquarian Society

was appointed Superintendent of their Natural History department. It was likewise proposed, that he should have the privilege of lecturing in their hall when he should think proper ; but, as the intended lectures were not at that time finished, the gentleman declined that privilege. Your Lordship must likewise be informed, that this lecturer was not to teach Natural History. His object was to deliver lectures on the Philosophy of Natural History, which is a subject totally different from what a public professor is obliged to teach. A professor must instruct his students in the technical and elementary parts of the science ; but the private lecturer was to confine himself to general views of the economy of nature. Some members of the Antiquarian Society endeavoured to unfold the nature of these lectures ; and they thought they had satisfied Dr WALKER, that no interference could ever happen. He was told, that the intended lectures might excite a taste for natural knowledge in this country, and, of course, that the number of students who wished to be acquainted with the science at large would be augmented. But it appears from the University memorial, that the Doctors ap-

prehensions have revived. Besides, your Lordship will please to be informed, that the composition of the lectures alluded to was begun in 1774, by the advice of the learned and ingenious Lord KAMES, and that the plan of them received the approbation of Dr RAMSAY, who was then Professor of Natural History in the College of Edinburgh. After this concise detail of facts, can it merit belief that these lectures were ever designed to rival the public professor? If the lecturer chooses to proceed, no body of men have a right to suppress the fruits of his labour. If his lectures are of any value, they will be encouraged; if otherwise, they will meet with neglect. The mighty crime committed by the Antiquaries was to offer one of their number the use of their hall. Supposing they had been less generous, the expence of hiring a Mason Lodge would have been the only effect of a refusal."

AFTER deliberating on the several memorials which had been laid before him, the Lord Advocate signified, by a note to the Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, dated 28th March 1783, that he saw no reason for refusing to grant the prayer of the peti-

tion to the King for a royal charter, and even transmitted a draught of such a charter as he considered was proper to be granted, if His Majesty inclined to comply with the prayer of the petitioners. In consequence of his favourable report, the Royal Warrant passed the Privy Seal the very next day, in which His Majesty was graciously pleased voluntarily to declare himself the Patron of the Society. As soon as this warrant was received in Edinburgh, a charter was extended under the Great Seal. The gentlemen of this public office, sensible of the many advantages to be derived from the establishment of this society, generously refused to accept their accustomed fees; and the Royal Charter to the Society of the Antiquaries of Scotland, which is dated on the 29th March, was finally ratified by passing through all the customary forms on the 5th and 6th of May 1783.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the bustle and opposition which had been occasioned by the proposed lectures on the Philosophy of Natural History, Mr SMELLIE, who had been long a member of the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh, was associated or elected a mem-

ber of the Royal Society of Edinburgh on the 23d June 1783. Lord BUCHAN, who was likewise a member of the Philosophical Society, was so much dissatisfied by the opposition which had been made against passing the charter to the Antiquaries, that he refused to become a member of the Royal Society. On the envelope of a collection of the printed memorials respecting this opposition, now in the possession of the author of these pages, the following is written by his Lordship.

“ **LORD BUCHAN** refused to have his name enrolled from the Philosophical to the new Royal Society of Edinburgh, thinking it proper that enquiry should be made hereafter why he thus refused ; and that this enquiry should inflict the proper punishment on the authors of the disingenuous opposition to the Antiquary Society.”

On the subject of Lord BUCHAN resigning his seat in the Philosophical Society, that he might not become a member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the two following letters passed between his Lordship and Mr SMELLIE.

## No. XCIX.

*From the Earl of BUCHAN to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,                    *Edinburgh, 12th February 1783.*

HAVING this day given in my resignation of my place as a member of the Philosophical Society, and desired a minute of my resignation to be entered to-morrow by the Secretary, I cannot have an opportunity of attending that or any subsequent meeting of that body. It will be very agreeable to me, if you attend and report to me the proceedings of that *extraordinary* meeting.

My regard for you is too sincere not to oblige me to entreat of you to be silent on the occasion. It is needless for you to exasperate the vulgar, who may hurt you,—men who will blush, and whose children will blush hereafter, on account of the phenomenon of these days. I am, with regard, &c.

BUCHAN.

## No. C.

*From Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to the Earl of BUCHAN.*

MY LORD, Edinburgh, 15th Feb. 1783.

I LAST night attended the extraordinary meeting of the Philosophical Society. Instead of the petition to his Majesty, we had only an account of its contents from the President, Dr CULLEN. We were told that every thing in it was conceived in the most general terms,—that it mentioned not any other society, but left the nomination of the original members to his Majesty,—that he had not a doubt that every member of the Philosophical Society would be admitted into the Royal Society,—and that the plan was modelled upon that of the Royal Society of London.

THE business was concluded by a motion, that another letter to the Lord Advocate should be sent by the Secretary, requesting his Lordship, in the affair of the charter, to pay every attention to the interest of the

Philosophical Society. The motion was carried unanimously. With regard to your Lordships resignation, the Secretary was about to table it ; but the President said that, as the meeting was called for a particular occasion, no other business could be admitted that night ; and added, that the matter was of a serious nature, and required deliberation ; and therefore moved that it should lie on the table till the next meeting. To which motion no opposition was made.

I WOULD have done myself the honour to have called on your Lordship, but am so very busy that I find it impracticable. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

A SCROLL copy of the Latin diploma which was to have been granted to the members of the Antiquarian Society, was sent to Mr SMELLIE for his consideration and remarks, on which occasion he returned it with the following critical observations.—1. *Conditor* can apply to the Earl of BUCHAN only. The diploma will, I hope, have no limited duration. I wish his Lordship to remain long among us ; but, as

that cannot be perpetual, I think the word *Conditor* should be deleted.—2. *Propræsedibus* must be an error of the transcriber.—3. I do not see the propriety of *olim*.—4. *Multiplice* is an evident error in transcription. Upon the whole, so far as I may be permitted to judge, the formula is extremely neat, and elegantly classical.

As connected with the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the following letters are inserted in this work; and, though some of them have no reference to Mr SMELLIE, they have been deemed worthy of preservation.

## No. CI.

WILLIAM STRAHAN, *Esq. to the Earl of BUCHAN.*

MY LORD,      *London, 8th September 1781.*

HAD I heard of your having done me the honour of calling at my house last spring, I should most certainly have returned your Lordships visit; but it never came to my knowledge.

I AM duly sensible of your kind partiality to me in many respects; and in particular,

without my participation, for your proposing me as an honorary member of your newly erected Society of Antiquaries ; but I am sadly afraid your Lordship will find me a very unworthy one, my time being wholly engrossed in far different employment. The objects of the institution I nevertheless highly approve of, and shall embrace every occasion that may offer to contribute to its prosperity. But I am afraid it will be no easy matter to defray the unavoidable expence attending this undertaking, without royal assistance, and a handsome yearly subscription from the members themselves. The last I consider as indispensably necessary. And as for a suitable apartment, as well to meet in, as for depositing your curiosities, I should suppose you may be easily accommodated in the new Register Office, when that building is completed. I dare say his Majesty would not deny this, if the request is made by any decent number of the Scots nobility and gentry in a proper manner.

I AM glad to find the attention of this infant society is already turned towards the more ancient records of Parliament, and other sources of historical evidence, so early as the

14th and 15th centuries. I have long wished to see every material paper that now remains among our archives fairly laid before the public, that it may at once be ascertained whether any new lights can be added to those we are already in possession of, respecting our history at any time previous to the Union. From that period, the history of England is our history.

I FEAR it will be no easy matter to accomplish what your Lordship seems to wish, viz. to rouse the attention of our wealthy countrymen here to this undertaking. Very few of them, at least among my acquaintance, have any turn for such kind of studies ; and are, besides, engrossed by other pursuits. If, however, your Lordship, or the Society at large, can point out any practicable method of serving them here, I shall always be ready to do my utmost to advance their interests.

I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM STRAHAN.

## No. CII.

ROBERT ADAM, *Esq. to the Earl of BUCHAN.*

*Adelphi, London, 19th September 1781.*

MY LORD,

IT is with great regret I have been obliged so long to postpone returning an answer to your Lordships very flattering and obliging letter of the 14th July. I was in great expectation I might have found some proper channel of conveying your Lordships wishes respecting your useful institution to his Majesty. My own situation at court, or rather my own situation not at court, prevents me from having it in my power to do what would have been very pleasing to me on this occasion ; and, what is worse, my having no correspondence with Sir WILLIAM CHAMBERS puts it out of my power to use that vehicle of intelligence ; nor have I yet been able to find out any other person who could apply, or whose application would carry weight along with it.

IF, in the course of the winter, when my friends come to town, I can in any shape contribute to promote the interest of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland, your Lordship may be assured I will eagerly seize the first opportunity of being useful.

IN the mean time, I cannot delay one moment returning my most sincere thanks for the great honour your Lordship and the Antiquarian Society have conferred upon me; your Lordship in proposing, and the Society in unanimously electing me an honorary member of their body. I wish it were in my power to acknowledge the sentiments of gratitude I feel, by doing something that might entitle me to merit so disinterested a mark of your Lordships and their attention.

NOT having Mr CUMMINGS particular address, I have presumed to take this method of acknowledging the receipt of his letter to me of the 6th instant; by which he communicates, in the most polite manner, the honour done me, by being chosen an antiquarian in my native land.

ALL the family of ADAM desire their most respectful compliments to your Lordship. My sisters request theirs to Lady BUCHAN. I have the honour to be, &c.

ROBERT ADAM.

No. CIII.

*Mr SMELLIE to the Earl of BUCHAN.*

*Edinburgh, September 26. 1781.*

MY LORD,

IN your Lordships written account concerning the lectures to be given by the Keeper of the Museum, I observed that the word *ballot* was mentioned.

IF the word *requested* be used, it implies an honour. Now, I cannot conceive how any person can receive an honour from a society by ballot. If *permitted* be employed, the word implies a power in the Society to *prohibit*, and therefore cannot go to ballot.

BUT whether the use of the Hall shall be granted to the lecturer? Here the property of the Society is concerned; and the alterna-

tive may certainly be *ballotted*. These thoughts are meant for your Lordships consideration. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

THE following letters took place in consequence of a singular controversy, raised by the late Mr JOHN BALFOUR, bookseller in Edinburgh, about the office of bookseller to the Society of Antiquaries, to which Mr CREECH had been nominated at the first meeting, when the Society was constituted, on the 18th December 1780. The first of the series is an attempt by the Earl of BUCHAN to dissuade Mr BALFOUR from agitating the question ; but in which endeavour he was unsuccessful. Mr BALFOUR was equally unsuccessful in the controversy ; for Mr CREECH was continued in the office, and still is bookseller to the Society. The other three letters were printed and circulated among the members.

## No. CIV.

*The Earl of BUCHAN to Mr JOHN BALFOUR.*

*Edinburgh, January 15. 1781.*

DEAR SIR,

I FIND that most of the Gentlemen whom I have happened to see consider the nomination of Mr CREECH, though not formal or by regular election, such as in delicacy ought to be abode by until next St Andrews day, when there will be, you know, a new election.

I THINK it will be dangerous in an infant society, not yet properly established, to be drawn into any struggle of interest; and therefore hope that your zeal for the promotion of so useful an undertaking will incline you to desist from any final trial on the occasion; though your votes may be numerous, your candour will be manifested on the occasion, and will be worthy of a person of your eminence in your profession, to act as my regard for you dictates on the occasion. I am, &c

BUCHAN.

## No. CV.

*Mr WILLIAM CREECH to the Earl of BUCHAN.*

*Edinburgh, November 29. 1781.*

My LORD,

As I understand that Mr BALFOUR is again making an attempt to supplant me as book-seller to the Society of Scots Antiquaries, and to substitute in my place his son, who is not a member of the Society, I take the liberty of begging the favour of your interest to check such a procedure.

I HAVE the honour of being an original member of the Society: and was appointed to the office I now hold by the President, with the unanimous approbation of the members, and recorded in the books; yet a person who is not a member is now proposed to supersede me.

IF I have committed any fault to merit such treatment, I will cheerfully resign the office; but if no improper behaviour can be

imputed to me, I hope your Lordship will judge it illiberal wantonly to offer me such an affront.

THE very short notice I have had of the present opposition, will, I hope, excuse the mode of this application.—The meeting of the Society is to be held at the Museum to-morrow evening at seven o'clock. I am, &c.

WILLIAM CREECH.

No. CVI.

*Mr JOHN BALFOUR to the Earl of BUCHAN,*

*Edinburgh, November 29. 1781.*

MY LORD,

I MADE application in favour of my son, ELPHINGSTON BALFOUR, to be elected bookseller to the Society of Antiquaries; but, as I am told that it will be an objection to him that he is not a member, permit me to inform you, that I am ambitious of that honour, and propose to stand candidate for it myself; and your friendship in this affair I shall look upon as a particular favour.

I SHOULD never have thought of troubling the Society with a printed letter on this occasion, had I not this day seen one from Mr CREECH, which renders it necessary for me to state the matter of fact, and to show the great misrepresentations contained in that letter.

AT a meeting of gentlemen in the Earl of BUCHANS house, before the Society was established, a plan of it was laid before them. The superior officers were to be a President, five Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and Treasurer; and there were likewise proposed other officers, viz. a Bookseller, Printer, Engraver, and Painter. At a subsequent meeting, the superior officers were ballotted and elected; and it was committed to Mr SMELLIE to insert this fact in the newspapers. The advertisement was inserted, along with the names of the Printer, Bookseller, &c. as elected or nominated, though no election or nomination ever took place in the Society. When this appeared in public, it was immediately taken notice of; Mr BALFOUR, as his son stood candidate, and was thereby debarred, particularly complained of it to the Earl of BUCHAN; his Lordship wrote him a

very polite letter, requesting him, for the sake of the Society, and to prevent interfering interests in its infancy, to waive the matter at present, assuring him, at the same time, that there should be an election next St Andrews day, when he should have his interest and good wishes. Mr BALFOUR immediately complied with his Lordships request, though then he had a moral certainty of succeeding. At a subsequent meeting in the Society-hall, several members took this affair very hotly, complaining of the irregularity of the proceeding, and insisting for an election. When Mr BALFOUR understood this, he requested of them, that they would drop the matter at present, as he had settled it with the Earl of BUCHAN, who had promised that an election should be next St Andrews day; and also was so obliging as to add, that he should have his interest and good wishes. That this is the true matter of fact, I believe will not be disputed.

Now when St Andrews day is approaching, Mr CREECH pleads his nomination, he says, by the President, with the unanimous approbation of the members, and recorded in the Books. The President will communi-

cate what he knows of the matter ; but it is apprehended that no such nomination could take place, without a vote, or ballot of the Society. This affair was never voted or ballotted by them, therefore cannot be in their minutes ; let them be looked into ; it therefore cannot have the approbation of the Society. If there was an appointment by the President, it was irregular, and could mean only for one year, as his Lordships promise is engaged for an election at the end of the year.

MR BALFOUR, had there been an election or nomination for more than one year, would never have attempted to set it aside. He means no affront ; nor does he mean to supersede. He would wish to come in as bookseller, by a vote or ballot of the Society, or not all. After having narrated the fact, the comment upon it is obvious.

I AM sure the Society will do me justice, and be of opinion, (after having last year given up a moral certainty of success, merely from a view to the interest and welfare of the Society, and after having got a promise from the Earl of BUCHAN, that I should

have a chance this year), that it is very hard to be deprived of that chance. I have not a doubt, but the Society will enable the Earl to perform his promise. Let both candidates enter the field upon an equal footing ; he that loses, let him patiently submit. It is hoped, it will not be thought reasonable that, after a mistake has been committed, benefit should be received by that mistake to the prejudice of another. I am, &c.

JOHN BALFOUR.

THE meeting of the Society is to be held at the Museum to-morrow evening at seven o'clock.

## No. CVII.

*Circular Letter from Mr WILLIAM CREECH.*

*Edinburgh, 30th November 1781.*

*Friday Afternoon.*

SIR,

IT is with much regret that I find myself obliged to trouble you again on the subject of my last, owing to a very extraordinary

letter that has been circulated by Mr BALFOUR this morning.

MR BALFOUR now gives up the application for his son, and offers himself as candidate for Bookseller to the Antiquarian Society.

As Mr BALFOUR claims support, upon this occasion, by stating mistakes for facts, it is necessary that his pretensions on this footing should be corrected. Mr BALFOUR says, “The President and superior officers were ballotted and elected.” This was not the case; nor can it possibly be, that a new Society at a first meeting can elect themselves. Every person stood upon the nomination of the President, and unanimous approbation of the Society. Mr BALFOUR might, with as much justice and good manners, solicit to be appointed President as Bookseller; and it would certainly gratify a higher ambition.

ALL the offices stand upon the same mode of appointment; and if officers were to be displaced without any fault, but to gratify envy, this newly instituted Society would soon be thrown into anarchy and confusion.

MR BALFOURS claim of support upon the promise of Lord BUCHAN, is equally ill founded. His Lordship made no promise to support either him or his son ; but, on the contrary, mentioned that the gentlemen his Lordship had seen, considered that the nomination of Mr CREECH should be abode by. These facts will appear by his Lordships letter being read to the Society, if desired. I am, &c.

WILLIAM CREECH.

*P. S.*—THIS late application is owing to Mr CREECH not having seen Mr BALFOURS printed letter till two o'clock this afternoon.

As connected with the Antiquarian Society and Mr SMELLIE, the following miscellaneous letters and papers have appeared worthy of insertion in these Memoirs.

## No. CVIII.

*The Earl of BUCHAN to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR, Kirkhill, September 4. 1783.

I AM afraid the Public will begin to think you have too long delayed your promised publication of the History of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries since April 1782. I beg to know what progress you have made, as it is of material consequence that we should not seem to fall asleep on our good fortune. The pompous circulation of the papers of the Society among the censors does not seem to be of much consequence for the publication of a volume of transactions. I should apprehend that it would be much better to publish on a smaller scale, and to give only select papers, such as may tend to augment the reputation of the Society. I know few persons fitter for a survey on this plan than yourself, and hope you will do it with your first leisure. When a request is made, a meeting may be had in the beginning of

winter, for the necessary approbation. I am, with regard, &c.

BUCHAN.

No. CIX.

*Lord BUCHAN to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,                    *Edinburgh, December 5. 1783.*

IT seems to be of material consequence to the Society of Antiquaries at present, that the Annual Account, which you promised last year, should be published.

IT is not necessary, in my opinion, that any remarks whatever should be made on the business of the opposition to the charter. The memorials and answers speak for themselves. By omitting any observations on this part of the history of the Society, you escape all censure, and I wish it to be avoided.

A PRINTED list of the Society ought to be thrown off immediately, and put into the hands of our Secretary and Bookseller, reserving a proper number for our election,

which cannot hereafter be properly conducted without such information in the hands of those members who chuse to attend.

I SHALL be glad to see the proofs of the Annual Account, as they come from the press. I am, &c.

BUCHAN.

## No. CX.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to the Earl of BUCHAN.*

MY LORD, Edinburgh, April 2. 1793.

I HAD the honour of receiving your obliging letter of the 18th ult. An answer should have been transmitted sooner, but I delayed till I should be enabled to give your Lordship a satisfactory account of the present state of a very respectable society, of which you had the *honour*, and, an epithet I still more revere, the *merit* of being the founder.

AFTER the decease of our late Secretary, Mr FERGUSSON of Craigdarroch and Mr JOHN

DUNDAS, were the only Antiquarians who appeared to look after the interests of the Society. Along with Mr ROBERT BELL, W. S. who was Mr CUMMYNGS agent, we sealed up every repository that contained any of the effects belonging to the Society. Immediately after the interment, we procured a meeting of the council, who ordered me, in case of accident, to carry the cabinet of coins, &c. to my own house, where they now lie under lock and key; and, what is a better security, they are four stories high, and the stair is at least an angle of 60 degrees; so much the worse for my poor limbs.

AT a subsequent meeting of the council, I was elected Secretary to the Society; and was empowered to hire the house, and a noble one for the purpose, built by the late Mr HOME RIGG, at the foot of Gossfords close, Lawn-market, behind which is an excellent little area, for receiving the *runic* stones, and such heavy articles. That house is now hired, or taken, as we say, and the entry is to be at Whitsunday next.

I HAVE now given, my Lord, a concise, and, I hope, a satisfactory account of the

Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. I shall only remark upon the whole, that the present is the crisis of the *fever*. I shall exert all my powers; and I am happy to find that many of our most respectable members exhibit an unusual keenness. Your Lordships exertions, I am confident, will not be withdrawn. With regard to Captain NEUTE, every attention, when regular meetings can be obtained, shall be paid to your Lordships recommendation.

I CANNOT conclude without asking the favour of your Lordship to give, not my *compliments*, a cold unmeaning expression, but my warmest affection and esteem to the good and amiable Lady BUCHAN. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CXI.

ALEXANDER FERGUSSON, *Esq. President, and*  
*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE, Secretary, to Sir*  
*JOHN SINCLAIR, Bart.*

SIR JOHN, Edinburgh, January 31. 1794.

WE are desired by the Antiquarian Society of Edinburgh to write you what follows.

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THIS Society, of which his Majesty the KING is the gracious Patron, has subsisted more than a dozen years. The property they have acquired in medals, productions of Nature, books, manuscripts, and antiquities of various kinds, is by no means inconsiderable. But, from the want of proper funds to increase and to render this property permanent, they are apprehensive that their collections, without a suitable aid from government, will soon be dispersed, and, of course, be totally lost to the country. L.100 annually will completely prevent such a disastrous event. This sum, it is imagined, will not be refused by his Majesty, especially as we are informed there are excrecent funds in the Exchequer of Scotland fully sufficient to answer this, as well as many other valuable purposes.

Now, Sir JOHN, you well know, that his Grace the Duke of MONTROSE is President of our Antiquarian Society, and that he succeeded the late Earl of BUTE. If you will take the trouble of showing this letter, or of applying in what manner you may think most proper, to the Duke of MONTROSE, the success of this application, we think, is cer-

tain, and will be an additional proof of your attention to the Society, of your regard to the interest and honour of your country, as well as to the promotion of literature and useful science. We have the honour to be, &c.

ALEXANDER FERGUSSON, President.

WILLIAM SMELLIE, Secretary.

In his capacity of Superintendent of Natural History and Keeper of the Museum to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, Mr SMELLIE endeavoured to rouse the attention of the members of the Society to employ their endeavours towards forming a collection of the objects of natural history which are to be found in Scotland, particularly birds and quadrupeds; for which desirable purpose, he read a speech or proposal on the subject, of which a copy remains written by his own hand, which we have deemed worthy of preservation. In this original copy he has given to his own proposal the designation of a *motion*, while in fact it is a detailed proposal, with a series of minute directions for stuffing and preserving the animals he wished to have transmitted to the museum of the Society. We are uncertain of the precise date of this proposal, but

it was probably made soon after his appointment as Keeper of the Museum in 1781. It is here printed exactly in his own words.

*Motion by WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

A MUSEUM, or repository for the natural productions of Scotland, is one great object of this Society; and I have not a doubt but that, with a little exertion by our own members, it will soon become, if not the most useful, at least the most ornamental and amusing part of our collections. I therefore wish that it should be recommended to the different members of the Society, whether ordinary or correspondents, and particularly to such of them as reside occasionally in the country, to collect, by means of the gun, net, or other engine, all the birds, great and small, which frequent their respective neighbourhoods.

THIS motion I have reserved till the autumn, when the business of procreation and of rearing the young is in general finished among the feathered tribes; which circumstance greatly diminishes the cruelty of the persecution I propose. Besides, autumn and

winter are the seasons when many men spontaneously repair to the mountains and fields in quest of the very animals we are anxious to acquire. No gentleman, I presume will feel the ardour of the sport impaired from the consideration that his amusement is to be useful to his country, and a high gratification to the Society of which he is a member. I have only to add, that this also is the season when specimens of the various birds which frequent the Bass may be obtained at a trifling expence, by a proper application to the tacksman in the name of the Society.

I SHALL now endeavour to remove the only objection which can tend to prevent the execution of the purposes intended by this motion; and that is the supposed difficulty and labour in skinning, stuffing, and preserving birds. With a view to obviate such difficulties, I applied to a person in this city who preserves birds with considerable skill; but I received the mortification to learn, that he chose to make a secret of his art. I was therefore obliged to have recourse to books, particularly to the *Memoire Instructif* of M. Turgot.

As the preparation of large and small birds requires different operations, I shall give a few general directions, and subjoin separate instructions for the management of each kind.

*General Directions.*

1. **W**ITH regard to such birds as are taken alive, there can be no difficulty of transmitting them to the Museum, where they can be killed in the gentlest manner, and put into a proper state for preservation.
2. **W**HEN birds are killed by the gun, such specimens as are least mangled, and have their feathers in best order, should be selected. A male and female of each species make a complete specimen. If their nests, and eggs, and young, can also be procured, it will always be eligible to have them.
3. **T**HE beak, legs, and feet should be perfectly entire; because from these parts the naturalists commonly ascertain the genus and species.

*Directions for the Preservation of Large Birds.*

Large birds, comprehending all those which exceed the magnitude of a blackbird, must be skinned. For this purpose, two incisions are necessary, both beginning at the anus, and terminating at the juncture of the wing, on each side of the under part of the animals body. In every incision, the feathers should be carefully shed, to prevent their being cut. After the two incisions are made, the skin must be gently separated from the body, by a common pen-knife, or even by the fingers. The raising of the skin should be begun at the anus, and directed upwards. In the next place, skin the thighs, by pushing the feet and legs toward the body, and the thigh will slip easily through the skin which contains it. Then cut the tendons at the joint of the leg; scrape off the flesh which remains attached to the bone, and replace it with cotton, tow, or some similar substances.

THE thighs being thus skinned, and detached from the body, pass the finger, or the handle of the knife, between the back and the skin, by which means the latter will easily

separate from the flesh. Continue this operation till you arrive at the rump. Then pass a pair of scissars between the skin and the body, and cut off the rump at its articulation with the back, taking care not to injure the feathers of the tail, which are attached to the rump. When you have proceeded thus far, with one hand pull the skin toward the neck, and, with the other, draw the body in the opposite direction.

WHEN you arrive at the wings, separate them from the body at the second articulation. Scrape off the flesh which surrounds the bones of the wings, and stuff the voids with cotton, &c. as before directed with regard to the thighs. Continue to pull the skin upward, and flay the neck as we flay an eel, till you lay bare the posterior part of the skull. Then cut the skull transversely a little above its junction with the neck, and the head will remain connected with the skin only. Through the aperture in the skull, the brain must be discharged, and the void filled with cotton, tow, &c. mixed with powder of calcined alum and camphor. After this, put the head and body into their proper positions by similar stuffings. When the skin is entire,

ly separated from the body, scrape off all fatty substances that appear upon it, and powder it with calcined alum and camphor. The neck should be stuffed through the bill, and the exact figure and dimensions of it preserved. The beak should be filled with the same materials as the rest of the body. Tear out the eyes with any sharp instrument, and fill their cavities with cotton, &c. But, before taking out the eyes, make an exact note of their colours, that they may be properly imitated by artificial ones. When thus prepared, the birds may be easily transported in boxes from any part of the country to the Museum. It is almost needless to observe, that the boxes must be properly lined with wool or some other soft substance.

THERE is an order of birds, called *anseres* by LINNÆUS, including all the aquatics, as ducks, swans, &c. whose bellies are so closely covered with down that, if the incisions were made in that part of the body, their skins would be spoiled. The incision, therefore, in these cases, must be made on the back; and, where any down occurs, it may be pulled off, in order to lay the skin bare.

*Directions for the Preservation of Small Birds.*

SMALL birds may be skinned in the same manner as the larger kinds ; but this operation, where the carriage is not from foreign countries, is entirely unnecessary. Shed the feathers of the belly, as if you meant to skin the animal. Then, with the thumb or forefinger, press the body above the heart, which will push the intestines toward the anus. Afterwards make an incision sufficient to allow the whole viscera to be drawn out with small pincers. When the viscera are entirely removed, introduce a little flax, cotton, or tow, in order to clean the internal cavity. Then withdraw the cotton, put a finger into the body, and with it break the breast bone, by pressing it against the table. Without this precaution, when the bird dries, the breast assumes an unnaturally sharp and deformed appearance. This operation being finished, stuff the body, by means of a small rod, with cotton, tow, &c. intermixed with a little camphor and calcined alum. In this state, small birds may be safely sent from any corner of Scotland to the Museum.

THE above directions are chiefly taken from the *Memoire Instructif*, as already mentioned. But, as the author of that work all along supposes his birds to be sent from the East or West Indies, I was obliged to select such instructions only as were accommodated to the transmission of birds from small distances. Such gentlemen, therefore, as have perused the book, need not be surprised that no mention is made of spirits of wine, or other ardent spirits, and many other articles. These directions have the advantage of being short, and few in number. If, upon trial, they happen to succeed, I shall, on some future occasion, extend this motion to the collection and preservation of Scots quadrupeds, fishes, insects, and plants. It is to be remarked, that all preparations of this kind ought, if possible, to be made in winter, when there is little danger of insects lodging their eggs, &c. On transmitting these to the Museum, gentlemen are requested to add the local names, what they feed upon, at what seasons they appear or disappear, whether they come near the habitations of men, or keep remote from them. Mark likewise the form, situation, and materials of their nests, the number of eggs they sit upon, what

noises they make, whether they pair or not ; if they pair, what care the male takes of the young, &c.

PURSUANT to his declared intention of extending this motion, or proposal rather, Mr SMELLIE had begun, in the manuscript from which this article is copied, to write down directions for the preservations of quadrupeds ; but all that remains on this subject is too short and inconclusive to deserve preservation. It will readily occur to the reader, that the preceding directions were only meant for the preservation of specimens, in such a state as might suffice for having them safely transmitted to the Antiquarian Museum, and do not at all enter upon the minute operations which are necessary for placing these in their natural postures, and the means of their ulterior preservation and exhibition in appropriate glass-cases in the Museum. The individual mentioned by Mr SMELLIE as skilful in the preservation of animals, the late Mr WEIR, house painter in Edinburgh, was not always so fastidious in concealing the arts he practised with so much success. The writer of these Memoirs has more than once seen him employed in the process ; and both

saw and was informed by Mr WEIR, that he smeared the inside of the skins with strong mercurial ointment, to prevent the depredations of insects, and with the acetite of lead, or saccharum saturni, to facilitate the process of drying. All the stuffings likewise, which he employed, were impregnated with mercurial ointment. Besides which, after the specimens were nearly dry, he used to shed the feathers, and strew the skin all over with black pepper and saccharum saturni. Mr WEIR likewise preserved fish in an extremely beautiful manner, peculiar to himself. Having made a cast in Paris plaster of half the fish cut longitudinally, he carefully skinned that half, preserving the back fins, tail, and belly fins, and stretched the skin over the cast: When dry, having previously inserted glass eyes exactly like the natural, and artificially restored any tints or colours which might have been injured, he varnished the whole with copal varnish. With flat fish his process was more complex, as he exhibited always two casts, the back and belly, each covered by their own appropriate skins. These casts, or *alto reliefos*, were the most perfect representations of the natural fish, exactly as taken alive from the water,

that can possibly be conceived ; and they were quite indistructible, if carefully preserved from accident. Their only imperfection was, that the branchiae or gills could not be afterwards examined, in which some of the characteristic marks, used in systematic arrangement and nomenclature, particularly reside.

ALONG with the preceding directions by MR SMELLIE for the preservation of birds, there was found in his repositories the following letter on the same subject, written by the Rev. DR. JOHN STUART, minister of Luss, in answer to a letter from MR SMELLIE requesting information from him. DR STUART certainly deserves particular mention in these Memoirs, as, besides being intimately acquainted with MR SMELLIE, he was long employed by the Society at Edinburgh, for propagating the Gospel in the Highlands and Isles of Scotland, in translating the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament into Gaelic, for the instruction of the Highlanders in the Christian religion ; and may fairly be pronounced one at least of the most usefully employed literary divines of his time. We regret much, therefore, that no notices

of the useful and highly meritorious life of that worthy minister have reached our knowledge: All we know is, that he is most eminently learned in **Gaelic**, that most ancient language of such difficult structure and singular orthography, that most philologists have rejected its study in despair, pronouncing it, in extenuation of their own indolence, utterly barbarous and unattainable, though assuredly one of the mother languages or dialects of much of the modern mixed jargons, and perhaps even of some of the most celebrated ancient languages.

## No. CXII.

*The Rev. Dr. JOHN STUART to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR, Luss, October 2, 1781.

I AM sorry that absence from home for three weeks about the time that your letter came here, and some necessary avocations since my return, have prevented my acknowledging the receipt of it sooner. I am happy to find that you are a member of the Anti-

quarian Society, and that, at their desire, you are preparing a paper upon the methods of preserving birds and other animals ; a subject surely not unworthy of their attention, and upon which I have no doubt that you will throw some light. Any little assistance in my power is much at your service.

THE arts I have used myself, in preserving any of the more beautiful or rarer animals I could procure, are very simple, and cannot, I suppose, be very different from those of others. With regard to quadrupeds, I first, towards the lower part of the abdomen, make a cross incision of the skin from thigh to thigh, large enough to permit the whole trunk of the body to pass through. I then proceed to flay the skin carefully off, keeping all the external parts entire and sticking to it. I cut off both the hind and fore legs close to the trunk ; flay the skin from them down to the toes, and scrape off all the flesh from the bones. I cut off the neck close to the skull, and scoop out all the brains at the great hole of the occipital bone. I then throw into the skull some powder made of equal quantities of nitre, burnt alum, and black pepper, and scatter a sufficient quan-

tity of the same on the bones of the legs, and on all the inside of the skin. For the support of the fabric, a strong brass wire is run through the sole of each foot up to the skull, in which the end of it is fixed. In place of the bones of the back, I commonly use a piece of wood of a proper length, to which the four wires are firmly tied ; but I am persuaded that the real skeleton, knit together in the usual manner, would answer still better. I proceed to stuff the skin with tow, till it is swelled to the proper size, and then sow up the cross incision made at first between the thighs. The whole is made to stand upon a pedestal of wood ; and every part, while soft, is formed to the natural attitude. As soon as the real eye subsides, an artificial one of glass, or, in place of that, a round black bead is fixed in the socket, to which the eyelids, when dry, will firmly adhere.

I preserve the larger birds nearly in the same manner.—With regard to the smaller, there is much less trouble. Commonly, I only make one incision in the lower part of the abdomen, and scoop out all the entrails, taking care to keep the feathers clean by the intervention of a slip of paper. I then throw

into the cavity some of the powder already mentioned ; stuff it with cotton or tow, and sew up the skin. I set the bird, standing in the natural posture, upon a pedestal of wood, by means of two small wires run through the legs up to the head.

As to the preservation of animals in general, much of the success depends upon getting as fresh and as perfect specimens as possible, and keeping the hair or feathers from being ruffled, or sullied with blood or otherwise. Winter or spring are the seasons which answer best. After animals are thoroughly dried, there is great difficulty, especially in a damp house, in keeping them from the depredations of insects. For this purpose I have rubbed the whole inside of the skin with a solution of corrosive sublimate. This, however, soon corrodes the wires, and does not in the least secure the hair or feathers, to which there is a little *tinea* that is peculiarly destructive. The most successful method I have tried, is keeping them in very close boxes made of hard timber, with glass on one side ; and, for farther security, the boxes may be lined with paper dipped in a solution of corrosive sublimate. It will like-

wise tend greatly to preserve them, if, once or twice every year, and especially in the months of July and August, they are put into an oven, and exposed for some time to such a degree of heat as will not singe the hair or feathers.

I HAVE preserved fishes very prettily by flaying the skin from one side, so as to exhibit one complete view, expanding it upon a board till it dries, then varnishing it gently over, and laying it up in a book like a dried plant.

FOR these two years past, I have been in so bad a state of health, that I was obliged to drop thoughts of publishing any thing in Gaelic so soon as I once intended. I hope, however, to be in Edinburgh some time next winter, in order to print the Pentateuch in the first instance. I am, &c.

JOHN STUART.

IN August 1781, Mr SMELLIE drew up, at the desire of the Society of Scots Antiquaries, the first regular plan which was devised for procuring a Statistical Account of the Parishes of

Scotland, which plan was printed and distributed by order of the Society. Although this produced little or no effect at the time, except a statistical report of the parish of Uphall, by the Earl of BUCHAN, in which he then resided, and three or four others which are printed in the Transactions of the Antiquarian Society ; yet it was the precursor or parent of the scheme, which the enlightened and persevering efforts of Sir JOHN SINCLAIR of Ulbster afterwards brought to maturity, in that excellent and unparalleled work, the Statistical Account of Scotland.

ABOUT thirty of the portraits of the early members of the Antiquarian Society were drawn in black lead, at the expence of the Earl of BUCHAN, by the late celebrated Mr JOHN BROWN, who was particularly excellent in that stile of drawing. Among these was the portrait of Mr SMELLIE : One of his peculiarities was, that his thick hair was generally long and ill ranged, what is called bushy, or a *towzie* head in the Scots dialect. While sitting for this portrait, Mr BROWN frequently remarked that Mr SMELLIE had a charming head of hair for the pencil, but was always complaining of his restlessness and unsteadiness in sitting. This drawing is a striking

likeness, and is deposited in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries ; but we have chosen to copy for this work a very strong and characteristic likeness painted in oil by his son-in-law Mr GEORGE WATSON, which portrait remains in the possession of Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE.

As it may be useful hereafter, we have subjoined a list of these portraits by Mr BROWN, which are carefully preserved in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Buchan.	Dr Andrew Duncan, sen.
The late Sir Jas Montgomery, Lord Chief-Baron.	Adam Lawson de Cardonnel, Esq.
The late Sir Alex. Dick, Bart.	Mr Jo. Caw, Excise.
The late Sir John Dalrymple, Bart.	Mr William Jones, statuary.
The late Roger Robertson, Esq. of Ladykirk.	Mr John Williams, mineral surveyor.
The late John Erskine, Esq. of Alva.	The late Dr John Brown.
The late Wm. Charles Little Gilmor of Craig-Millar.	The late Mr George Paton, Custom-house.
Sir John Henderson, Bart.	The late Mr Wm. Anderson, W. S.
The late Mr A. Drummond, French teacher.	The late Bishop Geddes.
	The late Mr James Cuming, Secretary to the Society.
	The late Mr David Deuchar.

Principal Gordon of the Scots College, Paris.	Rev. Mr Fitz-Simons.
Mr Baxter, architect.	The late Dr George Barclay.
The late Mr Alex. Brown, Advocates Library.	The late Mr William Smellie, printer.

THE following short Address was read by MR SMELLIE at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries on the 3d December 1793.

“ IT is now thirteen years since this Society was instituted, and was soon afterwards erected into a royal corporation by a most ample charter from his present Majesty. The business of the Society proceeded for some years with unexpected success. It soon became a favourite with the public; and, for some time, both patronage and money were amply supplied. But, like most other laudable and literary institutions, from causes which might be explained, but which I shall not now mention, some of its members became remiss. The fire of their original zeal became feeble, or was entirely extinguished. Our meetings, however, though not so numerously attended as at first, were never in-

terrupted for more than a few months; and that interruption was occasioned by the death of our former Secretary, and some other sinistrous incidents with which you are well acquainted. Instead of langour or despair, let us not affront ourselves, and, what is a greater object, our country, by neglecting an institution of such importance to Scotland. To repress all such inglorious ideas, let us reflect on the conduct and situation of our sister kingdom. The Antiquarian Society of London, instead of three or four months, was totally suspended for more than a century: yet, by the manly exertions of a few individuals, it was revived after so long a period, and still continues to enrich science, and to do honour to the nation. Shall we, who have met with no such humiliating repulse, give up an object so honourable to our country, and imitate the conduct of some late members, who have meanly deserted, or attempted to desert their posts? I will not allow myself to hesitate one moment on a supposition so disgraceful to our institution. Let our remaining veterans, therefore, augment their courage! Let us enlist fresh troops, who, by their conduct, shall acquire applause! and

let us, at the same time, exhibit all deserters to merited contempt!"

THE Professorship of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh was instituted by the Crown about 1770; and the late worthy and respectable Dr RAMSAY was the first *regius* professor appointed to that chair. On his death in 1775, he was succeeded by the late Reverend Dr JOHN WALKER, then minister of Moffat, and afterwards of Collington near Edinburgh; after whose decease in 1803, the royal presentation was given, in 1804, to the present Professor, Mr ROBERT JAMIESON, a pupil of the celebrated mineralogist, Professor WERNER of Freyburg in Saxony.

It would appear that Dr RAMSAY, whose health was long delicate, did not deliver his courses of lectures with uniform regularity, and that, for some years before his death, he did not lecture at all. In the year 1774, Lord KAMES, who was always eager to promote every plan that had a tendency towards the improvement of Scotland in agriculture, manufactures, arts, sciences, or education, and who besides was much attached to Mr SMELLIE, with whose attainments in the stu-

dy of natural history he was intimately acquainted, made a proposal that Mr SMELLIE should deliver a series of Discourses or Lectures on the Philosophy and General Economy of Nature, leaving the regular treatment of it as a technical science, especially in its systematic arrangement and nomenclature, to the public professor. Mr SMELLIE most readily entered into his Lordships views and suggestions on this subject, which so strongly coincided with his own taste and favourite studies. This plan even met with the hearty approbation of Dr RAMSAY, who contributed his advice and assistance with the most candid and cordial alacrity, pointing out and furnishing to Mr SMELLIE such books as were best adapted for facilitating the purpose. Mr SMELLIE accordingly began to collect and arrange materials for his intended Lectures, and proceeded in preparing himself for several years ; but was diverted from the completion of his plan at the time, by engaging in translating the Natural History of the Earth and of Quadrupeds from the French of the Count de BUFFON, which fully occupied all the leisure he could spare from business for a considerable period,

ON the death of Dr RAMSAY in 1775, Mr SMELLIE became a candidate for the vacant chair of Natural History, which is in the gift of the Crown. It is impossible now to state particularly the interest which he endeavoured to put in motion on this occasion ; but it will be seen by some of the following letters, that SIR JOHN DALRYMPLE of Cousland, Bart. warmly espoused his cause. THOMAS DUNDAS, Esq. younger of Kerse, then member of Parliament for the city of Edinburgh, now Lord DUNDAS, from his connexion by marriage with the noble family of WENTWORTH EITZ-WILLIAM, and by the strong Parliamentary interest of his father, the late SIR LAWRENCE DUNDAS, had much weight with the then ministry, and was considered as having it in his power to nominate, or, what is the same thing, to recommend a candidate to the Secretary of State for Home Affairs. It is an unavoidable circumstance, much to be deplored, that the appointments to professorships in the University of Edinburgh, both those under the patronage of the Crown, and those which are in the nomination of the Town Council, are too much apt to be influenced by political considerations, instead of being open to the competition of genius and

learning : Yet it is perhaps hardly possible to devise any plan for appointment or election into which interested motives of choice may not enter. It however fortunately happens that the pecuniary value of professorships in our University depends, in a very material degree, upon the estimation in which the professors are held by the students ; as by far the greater part of the emoluments of most of the chairs, and in some the whole is derived from the very moderate fees which the students pay for their admission tickets. From the remains of correspondence which we have on this subject, it would appear that Lord KAMES had declined to support the interest of Mr SMELLIE on this occasion ; most probably influenced by the part which he had already taken in the politics of Stirlingshire, the representation for which was then contested between the interests of the Duke of ARGYLE and Sir LAWRENCE DUNDAS. The first letter in this series is from Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE to Mr SMELLIE, but without date ; and it appears to have been in answer to one on the subject from Mr SMELLIE, which does not appear. The letter, likewise, from Mr SMELLIE to Mr now Lord DUNDAS, has no date in our copy. But it is obvious, that

the whole series must have taken place between the months of January and March 1776.

### No. CXIII.

*From Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR,

*No date.*

I KNOW to my certain knowledge that Lord NORTH has given the disposal of every thing in Edinburgh to THOMAS DUNDAS, to enable him to keep the town. I will write to him with all my heart. But, as he is pushed in Edinburgh by the Duke of BUCCLEUCH, and is likely to be pushed in Stirlingshire by the Duke of ARGYLE, he is forced to give every thing with a view to his politics, much against the natural turn of one of the best heads and hearts I am acquainted with.

I DO not know any thing of Lord KAMESES connexions in Stirlingshire. But if he and his son will chuse to explain themselves to THOMAS DUNDAS, I dare say he will get you this thing.

If you go to the Advocate, you will do yourself a mischief ; because it will force THOMAS DUNDAS to oppose you for the reputation of his power. Besides, ever since he fell upon Lord NORTH'S conciliatory proposition relative to the revenue of February 1774, he has no more interest there than my foot.

INDEPENDENT of your interest, I wish extremely you had the professorship, as there are such numbers of students of medicine from all countries, many of whom have a respect for the place of their education, that the best Museum in the universe might be collected in Edinburgh by their benefactions, if there was a room to receive it, and money for the carriage and preservation of the things. I think I could get Lord MOUNT-STEWART to engage in this. I am, &c.

JOHN DALRYMPLE.

## No. CXIV.

SIR JOHN DALRYMPLE, *Bart.* to THO. DUNDAS,  
*Esq.* M. P.

DEAR SIR,              *Edinburgh, Feb. 22. 1776.*

I WROTE you formerly about Dr RAMSAYS professorship of Natural History. SMELLIE, besides being very able for the business, has this advantage, that he lives close in Edinburgh, is much liked, and has a sagacious insinuating address, which may make him useful to you in your polities; and he will go through fire and water to do any thing I bid him, provided it is not wrong.

KAMES is doating, I fancy, for he will not apply to you. Yours, &c.

JOHN DALRYMPLE.

## No. CXV.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to THOMAS DUNDAS,  
Esq. M. P.*

SIR,

*No date.*

You have a right to be surprised at my addressing you. Though I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I am no stranger to your character ; and nothing but your reputation for candour and generosity could have induced me to give you this trouble.

SIR JOHN DALRYMPLE has written to you in my favour, respecting the professorship of Natural History in this College. This science has always been my favourite study ; and I have even composed a set of Lectures on the subject, because my friend Dr RAMSAY never taught a regular course. When that gentlemans health began to decline, about twelve months ago, Lord KAMES wrote to Lord SUFFOLK, recommending me to that Chair, in case of a vacancy. Lord SUFFOLK returned a polite answer ; and I feel all due

gratitude to Lord KAMES. But I soon after learned that you, Sir, had procured the disposal of it from the minister; and I instantly thought of Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE as the only active friend who could apply to you with propriety. This he cheerfully did: And I hope it will not be thought unnatural for me to be anxious to learn if I have any chance of success.

I AM not fond of writing concerning myself. But I can with truth assert that, if either the Town Council or the citizens at large were to be consulted, I would be much more acceptable to them than any other candidate I have heard of.

I KNOW that the most honourable men are often obliged to sacrifice inclination to politics. But, even in this line, I have hazarded something, as Dr GILBERT STUART, and many other of your friends can testify. Were any farther character necessary than that from Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE, I might refer you to every professor in the University of Edinburgh, and to most men of letters in Scotland, excepting those who oppose your interest. My success, I imagine, would be

agreeable to Sir WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM of Livingston, now in London. But I will exhaust no more of your time. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

THE allusion in the foregoing letter to having hazarded something in politics, is believed to refer to several political pamphlets which Mr SMELLIE had written during the contests for the command of the Town Council of Edinburgh between Sir LAWRENCE DUNDAS and his opponents. Mr DUNDAS returned an answer to Mr SMELLIE as follows.

No. CXVI.

THOMAS DUNDAS, *Esq.* to *Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR, *London, 6th March 1776.*

I MUST own the compliment you are pleased to pay me in the beginning of your letter gratifies me exceedingly, as from a person of Mr SMELLIES character and abilities I cannot expect flattery.

WITH respect to the professorship of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, the applications on that subject have been numberless ; and from the many and repeated recommendations which Sir LAWRENCE DUNDAS had from his friends of the City of Edinburgh, and from different members of the University, he was led to recommend Dr WALKER, minister I believe of Moffat, to succeed Dr RAMSAY. What the result of his and other recommendations may be, I cannot pretend at present to say. I shall only add, that I am sincerely sorry it puts it out of my power to interest myself in your favour so much as I could wish. I am, &c.

THOS. DUNDAS.

THOUGH disappointed in his hopes of obtaining the professorship, which was conferred on Dr WALKER, Mr SMELLIE resumed his plan of giving Lectures on the Philosophy of Natural History, which had been interrupted by the translation of BUFFON. He commenced his labours in the preparation of these Lectures in 1779, and expected to have got them into such a state of arrangement and forwardness as to have proceeded in their de-

livery in 1780 or 1781. About that period, Mr SMELLIE was elected Superintendent of Natural History to the Society of Scots Antiquaries, and was requested to deliver his intended Lectures, to the members and the public at large, in the Hall of that Society. The following letters on this subject will best explain the nature of the disputes which this proposition engendered. The Lectures were never pronounced; but a large portion of their intended materials was afterwards published, forming the *Philosophy of Natural History*, in two quarto volumes; the *first* of which was published by Mr SMELLIE in his own lifetime, and the *second* after his decease, by his son, Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE. Of these volumes an account will be given afterwards.

## No. CXVII.

*To the Earl of Buchan from Dr JOHN WALKER.*

MY LORD, Moffat, 14. Sept. 1781.

I RECEIVED the honour of yours of the 10th inst. concerning Mr SMELLIE. I find, what I suppose your Lordship has not been inform-

ed of, that, under the title of Keeper of the Museum of the Antiquarian Society, his design is to give Lectures on Natural History. I should never object to any person doing this as an individual; but to do it under the protection of a numerous society, containing so many respectable members, is what, to be sure, I cannot see without some regret. That private teachers, for their own interest, should pursue plans of this sort, is not at all surprising; but surely neither I, nor the University of Edinburgh, merit such an opposition from any public body. In the professorship I am soon to undertake, I have foreseen many difficulties, which I yet hope to surmount; but this indeed would be a new discouragement, which I did not expect. Were I to fail in my attempt, and be found incapable of teaching the science to the satisfaction of the public, the field would then be open, and I could have nothing to object. But till that happens, I certainly have some claim to be treated with equity and candour, I may say too with humanity, by those who think themselves concerned.

By engaging in that office, I run the risk, perhaps of some character, but certainly of

having my income diminished in serving the public ; which, at my time of life, is no very agreeable prospect, and renders me more dependent than ever I have yet been upon the support of my friends.

IF your Lordship will allow me to number you among these, I would beg your attention to what I have now stated ; which could not indeed so readily occur to your Lordship as to one whose reputation and interest is at stake. I shall be happy to receive your favourable answer ; and am in the meantime, with my best compliments to Lady BUCHAN,

Your Lordships, &c.

JOHN WALKER.

## No. CXVIII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to the Earl of BUCHAN.*

*Edinburgh, September 20. 1781.*

MY LORD,

FROM the last conversation I had with your Lordship, I learned that Dr WALKER has been complaining of my being appointed

Keeper of the Museum belonging to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, under the notion that I am to teach Natural History at large. To show Dr WALKER that I never had any such intention, I beg leave to trouble your Lordship with the following state of facts.

IN the year 1774, my learned, ingenious, and honourable friend, Lord KAMES, suggested to me a plan for Discourses or Lectures, not on Natural History as a science, but on the Philosophy and General Economy of Nature. This plan, which I highly relished, received such hearty approbation from the late worthy Dr RAMSAY, who was the first professor of Natural History in this country, that he gave me every assistance in books and advice. Your Lordship has seen this plan, and has likewise honoured me with a perusal of some part of the materials collected.

I IMMEDIATELY began the work, and proceeded for some years, till I was persuaded to undertake a translation of BUFFON. Had it not been for this long interruption, these Lectures would have been delivered some years before the death of Dr RAMSAY.

AFTER stating these facts, it is needless to remark, that the Lectures above taken notice of could never be intended to injure the public professor. The adventitious circumstance of Dr RAMSAYS death, and of Dr WALKERS succession, no man could foresee: and on the supposition that, at some future period, I should avail myself of my own labours, even Delicacy itself could have no right to complain.

PERMIT me to add, that I know your Lordship has long had, and still entertains a high regard for Dr WALKER, whose abilities and learning are universally acknowledged. I know that your Lordship has likewise honoured me with marks of attention. You wish both of us to succeed in our different departments, not from personal considerations alone, but because your Lordship is of opinion that, from an amicable correspondence, the interests of literature and of the public may be promoted by our mutual labours, which never can interfere. Instead of opposition, I know it to be the intention of your Lordship, as well as of the Antiquarian Society, if a friendly understanding take place, which I shall do every thing in my power to procure,

to communicate the specimens of our Museum to the University, for the benefit of Dr WALKER.

I BEG pardon for consuming so much of your Lordships time. The thoughts I have expressed are sincere: they are all friendly to the University and to Dr WALKER; and I hope they will remove every apprehension, and create an amicable intercourse between the parties concerned. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

To this letter the Earl of BUCHAN returned the following answer.

No. CXIX.

*The Earl of BUCHAN to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE,*

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received your letter, a copy of which I shall transmit to Dr WALKER, with one from myself; but I shall keep the original, to re-

main in my custody as a *pièce justificatif* of your candour and conduct. I am yours, &c.

BUCHAN.

DR WALKER was by no means satisfied with the reasonings employed on this subject either by the Earl of BUCHAN or Mr SMELLIE, and still continued decidedly adverse to the proposed Lectures. In this the Senatus Academicus of the University joined the Professor of Natural History; and, coupling their dislike to private lecturing with the countenance which the Antiquarian Society had given to the plan of Mr SMELLIE lecturing in their Hall, gave every possible opposition to that Society in their endeavours to procure a Royal Charter of Institution. This subject, however, has been already particularly noticed in giving an account of the Antiquarian Society, of which Mr SMELLIE was an original member, and afterwards Secretary. Although the following extracts from the minute-book of the Antiquarian Society of Scotland more particularly belong to the history of that Society, yet, as intimately connected with the present material incident in the

life of Mr SMELLIE, they are inserted in this place.

*Museum, Sept. 4th 1781.*

THE Earl of BUCHAN moved, That Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE, who is properly qualified, be appointed Superintendent of Natural History. His Lordship also moved, That the said Superintendent, if he chuses, may give Lectures in the Societys Hall, to the members or others, on the Philosophy of Natural History and Rural Economy.

MR ANDERSON observed, That, as this might interfere with the business of the Professor of Natural History in the University, he would be obliged to oppose the motion.

AFTER some reasoning, wherein the Earl of BUCHAN took occasion to mention the warm support he had all along given, not only to the establishment of the professorship, but likewise to the appointment of the late Dr RAMSAY, and particularly to that of the present Professor, for whom he retained a great friendship : That it was beneath the dignity of this Society to interfere with the in-

terest of an individual, which was by no means meant by the motion. His Lordship agreed, therefore, to defer the discussion of this matter till another time.

*Museum, October 2d 1781.*

THE Earl of BUCHAN addressed the meeting, on the subject of Lecturing on the Philosophy of Natural History and Rural Economy, as follows.

MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

As MR SMELLIE, our Keeper of the Museum of Natural History, may give lectures anywhere, and at any time, except in our Hall, without our permission, I see no necessity, at this time, for entering on the second part of the motion relating to Lectures on the Philosophy of Natural History and Rural Economy; more especially as the University of Edinburgh and Dr WALKER might take it in ill part, before the course which the public professor is to follow has been submitted to public view. When that course, long and ardently expected by the Scots republic of letters, shall have made its appearance, it will be easily known how to steer in the course which is the subject of our present consideration.

IT is impossible to exhaust the almost infinite subjects connected with the study of nature; and if Dr WALKER shall leave ever so little of that almost boundless subject untouched, it will undoubtedly be a legitimate object for the ingenuity of Mr SMELLIE, or any other individual, to expatiate upon and explain.

IT will be enough to propose the use of our Hall for such Lectures, when the Lectures themselves are prepared to be given; and, in the mean time, by delaying this matter, we shall manifest on all hands our candour to the public, our respect to the University, and our attention to the Professor of Natural History.

IT is therefore moved, That the second part of the motion, relating to Lectures being given in our Hall, shall be delayed *sine die*, to be taken up hereafter by a motion *pro re nata*, when circumstances shall suggest it; which was agreed to.

*Museum, November 5th 1782.*

AMONG other reasons given in the Earl of BUCHANS speech to the Antiquarian Society,

on hearing of the intended opposition to its charter, as explanatory of that opposition, are these :

“ WE have had the *imprudence* to encourage collections of Natural History ;—We appointed Mr SMELLIE, who is not a *professor* in the University, to be our Superintendent of Natural History,” &c.

IN the prosecution of his ideas on the subject of Natural History, having abandoned all idea of giving the intended Lectures, yet as connected with, or proceeding from that plan, Mr SMELLIE projected the publication of a General System of Natural History. The plan of this work, into which he proposed to have interwoven his intended Lectures, was drawn up several years before Mr SMELLIE died, and a considerable portion of it remains in M.S. in the hands of his son. The following is a prospectus, general account, or short table of contents, of this intended work, copied from a M.S. in the hand-writing of the late Mr SMELLIE.

## GENERAL SYSTEM OF NATURAL HISTORY.

### I. HISTORY OF THE EARTH.

1. Of its figure,—its dimensions,—its motions,—its connexion with the moon,—its relations to the other planets in the solar system, &c.
2. Of the earths surface,—its divisions into land and water,—its continents,—islands, mountains and plains,—rivers and lakes,—seas,—general productions, &c.
3. Of the earths atmosphere :—General properties of the air,—its motions,—uses in the animal and vegetable kingdoms :—of rain, snow, hail, dew, water-spouts, lightning and thunder, aurora borealis, and other meteors :—Examination of Dr Huttons theory of rain, &c.
4. Of the interior parts of the earth,—its strata,—their general positions,—their different substances,—their regularities and irregularities,—their fissures, &c.—Of mines and minerals ;—view of British strata ;—natural history of all the metals ;—of extraneous bodies found in the strata.

as shells, wood, bones, &c.—Of the causes of partial derangement in strata; as earthquakes, volcanos, the operation of waters below the surface, &c.—Of precious and other figured stones.—Several plates are to illustrate these subjects.

5. Of the different theories which have been formed upon the preceding and other historical facts:—Theory of **WOODWARD**, of **BURNET**, of **WHISTON**, of **SCHOUTZER**, of **BUFFON**, of **HUTTON**, &c.—A new Theory of the Earth.—General remarks by way of conclusion.

## II. OF ANIMALS IN GENERAL.

1. Of the structure and organs of animals and vegetables,—their discriminations,—their analogies in structure and organs, in growth and nourishment, in dissemination and decay.
2. Of the gradual progress of animals from birth to puberty, and thence to decay.
3. Of instinct;—its various kinds endeavoured to be classed,—its principal objects and uses:—Human reason a necessary result of the superior number of instincts possessed by man.

4. Of the distribution of Animals into classes, orders, genera, and species :—The arrangement of different authors from ARISTOTLE to the present time;—their principles of classification examined;—the technical system,—the philosophical system;—reasons why the Linnaean system of arrangement is observed in this work, in the animal and vegetable kingdoms.
5. History of man;—varieties of the human species, in figure, colour, genius, dispositions, manners:—Probable causes of this difference.
6. History of quadrupeds:—description,—manners, food, genius and moral character, habitations, address in seizing their prey and avoiding their enemies,—peculiar instincts, &c.

Engravings to be given of each known species; and the synonymes of authors to be added, with references to the works of natural historians.

7. History of birds, conducted in the same manner as that of quadrupeds, with the following exceptions: As the species are exceedingly numerous, and as many of them are so similar that they can only be distinguished by the aid of illuminated

plates, to give engravings of each species could answer very little purpose; besides that, it would augment the expence to such a degree as totally to frustrate the intention of this work. Several species of each genus only will, therefore, be engraved, which will suffice to give proper ideas of the rest; especially as short descriptions of the whole are given.

8. Amphibious animals, as turtles, serpents, &c.

9. Fishes.

10. Insects; including flies, worms, and microscopic animalcules: preceded by a dissertation on the transformations of insects:—Caterpillars to be engraved, where figures can be had.

N. B. These three classes to be treated of and illustrated as already mentioned in respect to birds.

### III. OF VEGETABLES IN GENERAL.

1. Classification of vegetables;—explanation of the Linnaean system, with the necessary plates, by way of example of a genus

from each class, and a species or more of each genus, &c.

N. B. The engravings to be executed according to a scale, which will be attended with many obvious advantages.

THIS General System of Natural History was to have been a conjunct adventure between Mr SMELLIE and the late Mr ANDREW BELL engraver in Edinburgh. Mr SMELLIE of course was to have written the whole of the work; Mr BELL was to have supplied all the engravings; and the profits were to have been divided between them in some fixed ratio, but of which no particular account now remains. This was the arrangement with regard to the translation which Mr SMELLIE executed of the writings of BUFFON, to be afterwards mentioned, in which Mr BELL held a similar share in consequence of executing all the engravings for that work.

THE intention of publishing this work was abandoned, as Mr SMELLIE was unable to find a bookseller who would undertake the expence of the publication, and at the same time allow a sufficient remuneration to him-

self for his trouble, and to his friend MR BELL for the cost of the engravings.

IN the plates of animals, with which this General System of Natural History was to have been embellished and illustrated, MR SMELLIE meant to have had them executed upon a comparative scale ; by means of which much more accurate notions would have been conveyed of the relative magnitudes of the several animals than by any description however elaborate. This plan was afterwards adopted by MR ANDREW BELL for the Encyclopedia Britannica, on the suggestion of MR SMELLIE ; in which extensive and elaborate work most of the genera of the *Mammalia*, or warm blooded quadrupeds, are represented by means of that comparative scale, each genus on a separate plate.

BY the following letter, it would appear that MR SMELLIE had consulted with the celebrated English naturalist and tourist, MR PENNANT, in regard to this projected work, and had communicated to him an account of the nature of his plan. We likewise learn from that letter, that this System of Natural History was under consideration about the

year 1785. Out of the projected Lectures, and the collections which Mr SMELLIE had made towards this intended System of Natural History, he afterwards composed his well known excellent work on the Philosophy of Natural History, to be afterwards more particularly adverted to.

## No. CXX.

THOMAS PENNANT, *Esq.* to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.

SIR,

*Downing, 31st July 1785.*

I HEARTILY wish you success in your new undertaking; and am obliged to you for your very acceptable offer of the prints, which I request you to leave as they come out with our friend Mr PATON.

SCHREBER has copied, and coloured most finely, numbers of DE BUFFONS prints, and added a few of his own. There is a German and a French impression, but not a third is finished, and perhaps never may, for want of encouragement, which is a pity. He lives at

Erburg. In his first sheets, like DE BUFFON, he passed some unjust reflections on me; but had the candour to write me a long letter with a full recantation and apology. For birds, by all means consult Mr LATHAMS new publication, nor neglect my Arctic Zoology.

As to fish, be cautious how you copy from CATESBY, for he omits fins, and is, in other respects, very erroneous in that article. I beg to know what you will do with that class, and whether you are in the press.

IN respect to system, I admire all of LINNAEUS except the two first classes, which are heaps of absurdities. As to mine on quadrupeds, these were formed by frequent consultations with Father PALLAS, a naturalist, in every respect, far beyond my old friend LINNAEUS. I am, &c.

T. PENNANT.

Mr SMELLIE made an excellent translation of BUFFONS Natural History of the Earth and of Man and Quadrupeds, in nine volumes octavo, with numerous notes and illustrations, and a considerable number of new ob-

servations. The character of this translation has ever been deservedly high ; and some of the reviewers, at its first appearance, very justly observed, that “ **BUFFON** now appeared to more advantage in his new dress than he had done in the original.”

ACCORDING to the information given by his son, Mr SMELLIE followed a very unusual mode in making this translation. Instead of rendering the work literally, paragraph by paragraph, and sentence by sentence, he deliberately read over six or eight pages of the original, making himself perfectly master of the authors ideas, and then wrote the whole down in English in his own words and arrangement. This assuredly is a more pleasant manner of going to work than the usual rigid adherence to the precise matter and words of the original ; and, where well-executed, must produce a translation of more than ordinary clearness, uniformity, and elegance of style and language ; but this mode can by no means be attempted by any one, unless he is completely master of the subject, and possessed of an uncommonly accurate memory.

MUCH the greater portion of this extensive work was executed in a small correcting room

or closet connected with his printing-office, where he was continually liable to interruptions, from the introduction of proof sheets for correction and revises for comparison, and to the almost perpetual calls of customers, authors, and idle acquaintances : Yet such was his accuracy of self possession, that, as usual with almost every thing he wrote, he gave it out page by page, as fast as written, to his compositors, and hardly ever found it necessary to alter a single word after the types were set up from his first uncorrected manuscript. Although, to have enabled him to execute this translation in the excellent manner in which it is done, Mr SMELLIE must necessarily have possessed a very thorough knowledge of the French language, it appears that he had acquired this entirely by means of his own private study, and without the assistance of any teacher ; for we have been assured by those who knew him very intimately, that he was quite unacquainted with the pronunciation of French. This fact, however singular, is by no means without parallel ; as it is quite certain that the late eminently pious and reverend Dr JOHN ERSKINE, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, made himself perfect master of the German language, and

in a very short period, by his own unassisted exertions, and never knew any more of its pronunciation than was to be learned from the grammar he employed.

A FRIEND of BUFFONS who came to visit Scotland was greatly surprised when Mr SMELLIE informed him that he could not pronounce one word of the French language. The gentleman instantly put this down in his pocket-book, and observed how much astonished BUFFON would be to learn that his translator could not pronounce the French language.

IN this excellent translation of BUFFONS best work, Mr SMELLIE introduced many original notes, observations, and illustrations of great importance, pointing out particular passages and opinions in which he differed from his author, and furnishing many new facts and reasonings; particularly, supplying the systematic nomenclature of LINNAEUS, the synonimes from different authors, and the names of the animals in the various languages of Europe. The Count de BUFFON was highly pleased with this translation, of which we have ample evidence in his own letters to Mr SMELLIE on

the occasion, which will be found in the sequel: He likewise transmitted a present to **MR SMELLIE** of his supplementary volumes, and remitted him the subscription price of three copies of the translation. The Count also urged **MR SMELLIE** to undertake a translation of his *Natural History of Birds*; but this he declined, because, in his opinion, a work of much less interest, and not nearly so well adapted for general sale. **MR PENNANT**, the celebrated British naturalist and tourist, and other literary men, wrote to **MR SMELLIE** on this occasion; and such of these letters as were preserved in **MR SMELLIES** repositories, and some of his own which refer to this subject, will be found in the sequel. In full proof that this translation received the approbation of the public, it may be mentioned, that it has gone through five numerous editions; and would probably have seen many more, had not the publishers thought proper to get the *Natural History of Birds*, which was published under the name of **BUFFON**, though only written by another person under his directions, anonymously, though exceedingly well, translated; and they make it now a rule not to sell the one without the other. As this work has now been long in the possession of

the public, and is well known and universally approved of, it seems unnecessary to give any minute account of it in this place; besides, the criticisms of Mr SMELLIES biographer and intimate acquaintance might be suspected of favourable partiality. It has been deemed right, however, to subjoin some short critical notices on the subject from unsuspicuous sources, as memorials of the opinions entertained of this translation by the professional reviewers of the period when it first appeared.

*Monthly Review for November 1782, Vol. lxvii.*  
p. 357.

“ THE great merit of the original of this work is too well known to require any character from us; and the present translator has accordingly performed a most acceptable service to his countrymen, who are lovers of Natural History, in translating it into our language, and in consulting their convenience with respect to the price of it, by comprising, in the compass of *eight octavo* volumes, nearly the whole of what was contained in the authors *sixteen in quarto*, price “ *sixteen gu-*

*ueas*,” excepting the dry and uninteresting anatomical dissections and mensurations of *M. DAUBENTON*, which greatly increased the bulk, and enhanced the price of the original; and which have been very properly omitted by the author himself in the last Paris edition of his performance. There are likewise some other omissions, which are not of much importance, respecting the method of studying natural history, methodical distributions, and the mode of describing animals.

“ THE translator has more than compensated for these omissions, and has enriched the present publication by adding, in the form of notes, short distinctive descriptions to each species of quadrupeds. For these he has been chiefly indebted to Mr PENNANTS valuable *Synopsis of Quadrupeds*, as well as for the figures of several new animals not to be found in M. BUFFONS work. Beside these useful additions, the synonimes, and the generic and specific characters given by LINNAEUS, KLEIN, BRISSON, and other naturalists are subjoined to the description of each species. The translator has likewise occasionally ani-

madverted, in notes, on particular passages contained in the original.

“ THE translation appears to us, in general, to be very well executed, if we except a few pardonable negligences of style, and the improper use of certain words peculiar, we believe, to the northern parts of this island. These, however, are slight faults, which do not often occur, and may be very easily corrected in a second edition.” After giving a considerable extract, as a specimen of Mr SMELLIES translation of this work, and some strictures on the theory of generation which M. BUFFON had promulgated, the reviewer resumes his consideration of the labours of Mr SMELLIE in this translation, as follows :

“ HAVING given a pretty large specimen of the present translation, it would seem scarce necessary to add any thing further concerning a work the original of which has been so long in possession of the public. It is to be observed, however, that M. de BUFFON, in the year 1776, published a supplemental volume, containing several interesting additions relating to various articles contained in the former volumes. These additions the trans-

lator has properly inserted under the articles to which they respectively belong.” After another considerable extract on the production of mules, and concerning the Hamster, or German Marmot, the review is concluded in the following words :

“ WITH respect to this work, we shall only add, that the numerous plates with which it is illustrated appear to us to be, in general, well executed ; and that, as M. BUFFON has not observed any systematic order in his History of Quadrupeds, the translator has supplied that defect, by adding an *Index*, in which the animals are arranged, in one column, according to the improved edition of *Mr PENNANTS Synopsis* ; the names of the same animals being repeated in an opposite column, together with references to the particular volumes of his work in which their descriptions and figures are to be found.”

*Critical Review for November 1782, Vol. liv.*  
*p. 371.*

“ THIS is not the first translation of BUFFON’s extensive work ; but the former is little

known, and scarcely deserves to be drawn from its obscurity. The History of Quadrupeds has been long since published in various forms, but that of Birds is less known, because M. BUFFON has not yet completed it. The work now before us is, in one respect, finished, as it comprehends the General History of the Earth, of Man, and of the different beasts. It contains also the supplementary volume published in 1776, the several parts of which are arranged in their proper places by the translator.

“ THIS translation is in general executed with fidelity: the little errors which we have remarked in our comparison are neither numerous nor important. The translator, Mr SMELLIE, is a printer in Edinburgh, and remarkable for his diligence and attention. His literary attainments are not inconsiderable: but, like his countrymen, he cannot forget the peculiarity of his language; and in this work we still meet with a few Scoticisms.—When M. BUFFON wantons in conjecture, his language is often laboured with additional attention; we lose the argument, while we admire the eloquence. Mr SMELLIE has checked the pleasing delusion; and, by dissipating the

cloud which, by the force of enchantment, had exhibited a beautiful figure, has shown the truth in its genuine colours. In this respect, **M. BUFFON** may lose by his new dress, but the cause of truth will gain."

In the LXI. Vol. of the same literary journal, for May 1786, the consideration of **BUFFON'S** Natural History is resumed, in consequence of the publication of a *second* edition of **MR SMELLIES** translation in nine volumes octavo. Into his original translation, in eight volumes octavo, **MR SMELLIE** had incorporated a first supplement by the author, which was printed in 1776. A *second* supplement had been published some years afterwards by the author, which formed the *ninth* volume of the *second* edition, and was likewise sold separately to accommodate the purchasers of the first edition. In this review, however, the principal scope of the observations refer to the labours of the author; and all that respects the translation is the following.

"THE translator has abridged the Epochs of Nature, and has only inserted the facts in their support. We first suspected that this step would have been injurious to his author, since

we well knew that the charms of the Count's eloquence had given grace to what was already known, probability to doubtful opinions, and uncommon brilliancy to truths. We found, however, that, though visionary, many well established facts supported his system; and, though in many respects erroneous, yet, in the examination, much new light was acquired, and the operations of nature were often elucidated. We cannot abridge facts, nor can we select any with advantage. We must at present conclude with thanking the translator for this useful addition to the Natural History, and for his liberality in the method of publication."

In the New Annual Register for 1782, p. 221, the following short character of this translation is to be found.

"THE prodigious application of late years to Natural History and Botany, hath occasioned a variety of treatises to be published in these branches of knowledge, which have great merit, and some of them are very elegant and expensive. Mr SMELLIE hath performed an acceptable service to the philosophical world by translating into English the

celebrated BUFFON'S grand work. One part of the value of this publication is that, at a reasonable price, it presents us with what would cost a large sum of money in the original. The difference between three pounds twelve shillings and sixteen guineas is no small matter in the pocket of many a good scholar. — There are some few things omitted which are in BUFFON; but then they are only such things as may be omitted without any loss to the reader: and MR SMELLIE, by his own notes, and an useful index, has added considerably to the worth of his translation.'

## No. CXXI.

*A Monsieur, Monsieur WILLIAM SMELLIE, de la Société Philosophique d'Edimbourg.*

*A Montbard en Bourgogne,*  
MONSIEUR, *le 18 Fevrier 1780.*

JE n'ai reçu qu'hier 17 Fevrier votre lettre dattée d'Edimbourg le 22 Octobre dernier; elle m'est parvenue avec le prospectus de la traduction de mon ouvrage, et une planche gravée du Daim, par la voie de M.

VOL. II.

I

Andrew Lumisden, gentilhomme Ecossais qui demeure à Paris, et qui est fort de mes amis ; il m'a marqué qu'il ne savoit pas le nom de la personne dont venoit ce paquet, et que néanmoins il m'offroit de faire passer ma réponse en Ecosse ; je lui marque de tâcher de vous l'envoyer promptement. Ce M. Lumisden est fort ami de M. Macgowan, qui demeure à Edimbourg, et qui a quelque amitié pour moi, aussi bien que M. Carnegi et M. James Bruce, dont nous avons eu des nouvelles de tous deux ces jours-ci, et encore de M. Mackenzie ; j'ai eu l'honneur de le recevoir chez moi. J'étois aussi jadis fort en relation avec M. Maclaurin, M. Murdoch, et quelques autres savans de vos compatriotes. Je ne vous faits ce détail, Monsieur, que pour vous montrer que je ne suis pas tout a fait étranger à votre noble pays, et je suis très flatté que vous ayez pris la peine de faire la traduction de mes ouvrages. Je suis persuadé, puisqu'ils vous ont plu, que vous les avez très bien entendus, et que votre traduction sera bonne et bien accueillie ; vos planches sont aussi très bien gravées. Recevez tous mes remerciemens de l'exemplaire que vous avez la bonté de me destiner, mais permettez en même temps que je souscrive pour

trois autres, que vous pourrez m'envoyer sans reliure, en les remettant à M. Macgowan ; qui doit aussi m'envoyer un globe céleste et un globe terrestre d'Adams, lorsque les dernières découvertes de M. le Capitaine Cook y seront tracées. M. Lumisden fera passer à M. Macgowan le prix des trois souscriptions que je vous demande, Monsieur ; et il pourra se charger de m'envoyer en même temps l'exemplaire relié que vous voulez bien m'offrir.

Au reste je vois, Monsieur, que votre traduction ne comprend que ce que j'ai inséré dans les quinze premiers volumes in 4to. et dans le volume de supplément à l'histoire des animaux quadrupèdes, et ce dernier volume doit avoir une seconde partie, qui fera un tome aussi gros ; on en grave actuellement les planches au nombre de 70, et je compte le mettre sous presse dans le courant de cet été ; les principaux animaux qui seront contenus dans ce volume, seront le Tapir, le Gnou, le Nilgaut mâle et femelle, les Antilopes, plusieurs Gazelles et Chèvres, le Musc, le Lama, la Vigogne, les grosses et petites Gerboises, &c. et un bon nombre de Singes. La plupart de ces animaux me sont arrivés, depuis l'impression des autres volumes ; et dès que celui-

ci sera achevé d'imprimer j'aurai l'honneur de vous en envoyer le premier exemplaire. Je vous aurois bien volontiers communiqué mes notices, si je n'avois pas voulu les faire imprimer, et il ne me reste rien quant a présent sur les animaux quadrupèdes.

A L'EGARD de la demande que vous avez la bonté de me faire, Monsieur, de me dédier votre traduction, je l'accepte avec reconnoissance, et je vous prie de recevoir en même temps tous mes remerciements des témoignages d'estime et des éloges que vous avez bien voulu me donner dans votre prospectus. Je prendrai seulement la liberté de vous observer qu'il y a des choses qui ne sont pas tout a fait exactes : par exemple, *que c'est par la munificence Royalle que j'ai eu tous les animaux, et que tous les frais de mon ouvrage ont été faits.* Vous pouvez être assuré, Monsieur, que le tout a été fait par moi même et par mes propres recherches. Vous dites de même, *que le Roi m'a annobli, pour me marquer sa satisfaction de mon ouvrage.* Je vous assure que j'étois noble auparavant, ainsi que mes ancêtres ; et que le Roi ma seulement accordé un titre de plus en érigéant mes terres en Comté.

Et puisque vous vous êtes, Monsieur, si fort occupé de mes ouvrages, il est bon de vous dire qu'ind pendamment des seize volumes in 4to. que vous connoissez, et de celui que je vais encore imprimer sur les quadrupèdes, j'ai composé l'Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux en neuf volumes in 4to. dont il y en a déjà six de publiés, et dont on imprime actuellement le septième, et qu'outre les planches gravées en noir qui sont insérées dans ces volumes, j'ai fait faire depuis 20 ans des planches in folio enluminées, qui représentent parfaitement les oiseaux avec leurs couleurs. Ces planches sont au moins aussi belles que celles de M. EDWARDS, et elles sont au nombre de mille ; c'est le plus bel ouvrage que l'on ait jamais fait en ce genre.

J'AI aussi donné au public en 1773 et 1774 deux volumes in 4to. sous le titre de Supplément qui servent d'Introduction à l'Histoire des Mineraux, à laquelle je travaille actuellement ; et j'ai publié en 1777 un volume in 4to. qui sert de Supplément à l'Histoire Naturelle de l'Homme. Enfin j'ai fait imprimer en 1778 un cinquième volume in 4to. qui est un des plus importants de tout l'ouvrage, et qui a pour titre *Des Epoques de la Nature* ; dont

je vous offre un exemplaire, si vous en êtes curieux. Mais il est facheux que le temps de la guerre interrompe les communications. J'ai grand regret à la perte que l'on a faite par la mort prématurée de votre grand navigateur le Capitaine COOK : Vous verrez, Monsieur, si vous lisez ce volume *Des Epoques de la Nature*, que j'ai bien mis à profit ses découvertes dans l'hémisphère austral.

Si vous me faites l'honneur de m'écrire, marquez moi je vous supplie, si M. le Docteur HORSELEY a publié la nouvelle édition qu'il préparoit des ouvrages de NEWTON. J'ai pris une souscription d'un exemplaire de cet ouvrage, pour laquelle j'ai donné 120 livres au secrétaire de Mylord STORMONT, lorsqu'il étoit Ambassadeur en France ; c'est un de vos nobles compatriotes qui m'a témoigné des bontés particulières, et dont je respecte beaucoup le mérite et la personne : mais je vous recommande encore plus de parler de moi à M. CARNegie, que nous avons eû le bonheur de posséder en Bourgogne pendant un an, et qui a emporté mes regrets, et ceux de toutes les personnes qui l'ont connu. Il ne demeure pas à Edimbourg, mais à Kinnaird, qui en est éloigné je crois de quinze ou vingt lieues,

J'ai appris avec grande satisfaction, que, quoique encore très jeune, il venoit d'être député des villes de son Comté.

RECEVEZ, Monsieur, les assurances de l'estime respectueuse, et de la connoissance, avec lesquelles j'ai l'honneur d'être, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

LE C<sup>TE</sup>. DE BUFFON.

*Translation of the foregoing by Mr SMELLIE.*

Montbard in Burgundy,  
SIR, 18th Feb. 1780.

YESTERDAY, the 17th of February, I only received your letter, which was dated at Edinburgh on the 22d of October last. It was accompanied with a prospectus of the translation of my work, and an engraving of the fallow deer, and was transmitted by my friend Mr ANDREW LUMISDEN, a Scots gentleman who resides at Paris. He informed me that he knew not the name of the person who had sent this packet; but undertook to transmit my answer to Scotland, which I begged of him to do with all possible expedi-

tion. This Mr LUMISDEN is an intimate friend of Mr MACGOWAN, who lives in Edinburgh, and has a friendship for me, as likewise have Mr CARNEGIE and Mr JAMES BRUCE, of both whom I have heard this day; and likewise of Mr MACKENZIE, whom I had the honour of receiving at my house. I was also, some time ago, a great correspondent of Mr MACLAURIN, Mr MURDOCH, and some others of your learned countrymen. I have entered into this detail to show you, Sir, that I am not entirely a stranger to your illustrious country; and I am exceedingly flattered by your having taken the trouble of translating my works. As my productions please you, I am certain that you understand them fully, and that your translation will be good and well received by the public. Your plates also are very well engraven. Receive my acknowledgments for the copy you are so kind as to destine for me; but permit me, at the same time, to subscribe for other three, which you may send me, unbound, by means of Mr MACGOWAN, who ought also to transmit me a pair of ADAMSES Globes, when the last discoveries of Captain COOK are engraven on them. Mr LUMISDEN will transmit to Mr MACGOWAN the price of the copies I ask, and

will likewise take the trouble of sending the bound copy which you are so kind as to offer me.

I PERCEIVE, Sir, that your translation is to comprehend only what I have inserted in the first *fifteen* volumes in quarto, and the supplementary volume to the History of Quadrupeds. To this last volume there is to be a second part, which will be as large as the first. The plates, to the number of 70, are actually engraven for it ; and I intend putting it to press in the course of this summer. The chief animals to be included in this volume are the Tapir, the Gnou, the Nilgau, male and female, the Antilopes, several Gazelles and Goats, the Musk, the Lama, the Vicuna, the small and large Jerboas, &c. and a considerable number of Monkeys. Most of these animals have come to hand since the publication of the other volumes ; and as soon as this volume is printed, I shall have the honour of sending you the first copy. I would cheerfully have communicated to you all my notices, if I had not intended to publish them myself ; and I have now nothing else remaining respecting quadrupeds.

As to the request you have been so good as to make, Sir, of dedicating your translation to me, I accept it with gratitude; and, at the same time, I beg you to receive my thanks for all the marks of esteem and all the eulogiums which you have so liberally bestowed upon me in your prospectus. I shall only observe, that there are a few things which are not sufficiently exact. For example, you say, "That I received all the animals through royal munificence, and that all the expences of my work have been defrayed by the King." You may be assured, Sir, that the whole was executed by myself, and by my own proper researches. In the same manner, you say, "That the King ennobled me, as a mark of his satisfaction with my work." Now, Sir, I assure you, that I was formerly noble, as well as my ancestors; and that the King only added a higher title when he erected my estates into an earldom.

SINCE you are so much occupied, Sir, with my works, it is proper to inform you that, independent of the sixteen quarto volumes with which you are acquainted, and of the volume upon quadrupeds I am about to print, I have composed the Natural History of Birds in

nine volumes quarto, six of which are published, and the seventh is in the press ; and that, beside the common copperplates which are inserted in these volumes, I have during twenty years caused illuminated plates to be made in folio, which give a perfect representation of the birds in their natural colours. These plates are at least as good as those of Mr EDWARDS, and they are a thousand in number. It is the most beautiful work of the kind ever exhibited to the public.

IN 1773 and 1774, I published two quarto volumes, under the title of “ Supplements serving as Introduction to the History of Minerals,” on which subject I am now labouring. And in 1777, I published a quarto volume as a supplement to the Natural History of Man. Finally, I published in 1778 a fifth volume in quarto, which is one of the most important of the whole work, and is entitled, “ Of the Epochs of Nature.” If you wish it, I shall present you with a copy of this. But it is vexatious that war should interrupt the communication between men of letters. I much regret the loss sustained by the premature death of your illustrious navigator, Captain Cook. You will see, Sir, when you read my Epochs of Nature, that I

have made much use of his discoveries in the southern hemisphere.

IF you do me the honour of writing to me, I beg you will inform me whether Dr HORSELEY has published his new edition of NEWTONS works. I subscribed for a copy of this work, for which I paid 120 livres to Lord STORMONT'S Secretary, when he was ambassador in France. He is one of your most accomplished countrymen, and shewed me every mark of civility. I shall ever respect both his merit and his person. I most earnestly beg of you to remember me to Mr CARNegie, whom we had the pleasure of enjoying in Burgundy for twelve months; and he left me, and every person who knew him, to regret his departure. He does not live at Edinburgh, but at Kinnaird, which is distant from it I believe about 15 or 20 leagues. I have learnt, with infinite satisfaction, that, though a young man, he represents the *burghs* of his county in Parliament.

RECEIVE, Sir, the assurances of the respectful esteem, and gratitude with which I have the honour to be, &c.

THE COUNT DE BUFFON.

## No. CXXII.

*A Monsieur, Monsieur WILLIAM SMELLIE, de la Société Philosophique d'Edimbourg.*

*Paris, au Jardin du Roi, ce  
14 Fevrier 1782.*

J'AI reçu, Monsieur, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire le 30 Septembre dernier, par laquelle vous m'annoncez le don que vous avez la bonté de me faire d'un exemplaire relié de votre traduction de mes ouvrages. Cet exemplaire, ainsi que les trois autres pour lesquels j'ai souscrit, ne me sont pas encore parvenus ; mais M. le Chevalier de LUMISDEN, qui vous remettra cette lettre, me les fera parvenir. Il a bien voulu se charger aussi de payer à votre libraire les trois exemplaires pour acquitter ma souscription ; et de plus je l'ai prié de vous remettre, Monsieur, le volume cinq de mes suppléments, qui contient les Epoques de la Nature, et que je vous prie d'agréer. Je pense que comme c'est une continuation et une grande explanation de ma theorie de la terre, vous le trouverez digne d'être traduit, car sans cela cette partie de mes ouvrages resteroit imparfaite.

J'AUROIS bien voulu vous envoyer aussi, Monsieur, le tome six de mes suppléments, qui contient la suite des animaux quadrupèdes, que je n'ai pu faire entrer dans le tome troisième de ces mêmes suppléments ; mais ce sixième volume de mes suppléments ne sera achevé d'imprimer que dans un mois ; et si je puis trouver alors une occasion, je ne manquerai pas de vous l'envoyer, car j'imagine que, pour rendre l'histoire des animaux quadrupèdes plus complète, vous traduirez le troisième volume de mes suppléments ainsi que le sixième, lorsque vous l'aurez reçu.

Recevez, Monsieur, les assurances de toute mon estime, et des sentimens de la respectueuse considération, avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être,

Monsieur,

Votre très humble et très

Obéissant serviteur,

LE C<sup>TE</sup>. DE BUFFON.

## No. CXXIII.

*Translation of the second Letter from the Count  
de BUFFON to Mr SMELLIE.*

*Paris, Royal Garden, 14th*

SIR, *February 1782.*

I HAVE received the letter which you did me the honour to write on the 30th of September last, by which you inform me of the present you have been so good as to send me of a bound copy of your translation of my works. That copy, and the other three for which I have subscribed, have not yet reached me, but Mr LUMISDEN, who will deliver you this letter, will send them to me. He has likewise been pleased to undertake payment to your bookseller for the three copies in discharge of my subscription; and I have likewise requested him to deliver to you the fifth volume of my supplements\*,

\* This volume was accordingly received and translated by MR SMELLIE, as well as the sixth supplementary volume mentioned in this letter, and both still remain in the possession of his son.

which contains the Epochs of Nature, of which I beg your acceptance. I conceive, as it is a continuation and enlarged explanation of my Theory of the Earth, that you will find it worthy of being translated, as otherwise that portion of my works would remain imperfect.

I SHOULD likewise have wished to send you the sixth volume of my supplements, which contains the sequel of the quadrupeds that I was unable to introduce into the third volume of these supplements : But this sixth volume will not be finished at press until a month hence ; and, if I can then find any opportunity, I shall not fail to send it ; as I imagine you will translate the third and sixth volumes of my supplements when you can procure them, on purpose to render the history of quadrupeds more compleat.

ACCEPT the assurance of my entire esteem, and the sentiments of respectful consideration, with which I have the honour to be,  
Sir, &c.

THE COUNT DE BUFFON.

THE following letters from the celebrated THOMAS PENNANT, Esq. to Mr SMELLIE, are well worthy of preservation, both on account of the subject on which they treat, the translation of BUFFON, and from respect to that voluminous and well informed author. Some other correspondence with the same gentleman will appear in a different part of this work.

## No. CXXIV.

THOMAS PENNANT, *Esq.* to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.

SIR,

*January 19. 1780.*

I SHALL be happy to be of any use in an undertaking so very agreeable to me, and in the hands of one so well qualified.

A NEW edition of my Synopsis of Quadrupeds will probably go this spring to the press; if it does, I will send you the Synopsis, or even sooner, of the hoofed division: the other I cannot, because I expect to find new species, which may derange the numbers,

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and you may thereby be drawn in to make false references. You may range the horse species thus, for they will not be changed.

1. **Generous.** To this is annexed a long account of the wild horse.
2. **Dshiketee,** or wild mule.
3. **Ass,** with a long account of the wild ass, or koulan.
4. **Zebra.**
5. **Quacha,** a new zebra.

UNDER the article **Ox**, observe the **Bison** of Europe is also found wild in America. I did not describe it as such in my old edition. Apply therefore to the American **Bison** all my synonimes in No. 6. but let the first and last paragraph stand, and give it the title of *Musk Ox*, No. 4. being a very distinct kind. Drop all mention of **Anon** and **Guavera**, p. 6.

M. DE BUFFONS want of candour may be further illustrated. You may say that Mr **PENNANT** sent to him the jackal, plate xvi. tom. III. Suppl. and that Mr **PENNANT** had it taken from the stuffed skin in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, and that he alludes to it, p. 159. *Syn. Quad.*

You may say boldly that his *Isatis*, pl. xvii. is not that animal, but the Corsak fox. *Syn. Quad.* p. 154. I think he had the drawing from me, but am not certain, so you had best keep silence.

I AM extremely obliged to you for the \* \* \* \* \* I am, &c.

T. PENNANT.

BEFORE proceeding with his translation of **BUFFON**, Mr **SMELLIE** issued an address and prospectus on the subject, for the purpose of endeavouring to procure subscriptions; and which address, before publication, he submitted to the critical inspection of several of the principal literary characters of the times. The following letters on this subject still remain, and are deemed worthy of being inserted in this place.

## No. CXXV.

*Dr HUGH BLAIR to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR, *Edinburgh, 16th June 1780.*

I HAVE read with care your address to the public, and think it will do very well. Only, in the first part, you seem to lay rather too much stress upon the knowledge of mind that may be derived from the brute creation ; and there are some expressions that require to be softened. In p. 1. l. 7. when you say, “There is one light in which she has never been considered with *any measure of attention.*” If you apply this, as you seem to do by what follows, to the philosophy of mind in general, it is too strong :—Sufficient to say, “has never been examined with sufficient accuracy.” In the following sentence too many couples are put together ; dele *crude acid.* In the following sentence, when you say, “ Philosophers have generally mistaken the true path, &c.” it will be thought strange to assert that the knowledge of brutes is *more the true path* to the science of mind than the knowledge of

of man. It will be sufficient, and will convey your idea, to say, “ Philosophers have in general too much confined the path that leads, &c.”

THESE corrections appear somewhat material. I see nothing else of consequence. Perhaps in p. 2. in place of “ *deformed by imitation*,” it might be as well to say, “ *misled by imitation*.” You have “ *cherish an order of enquiry*,” by a typographical error I suppose for *ardor*.

I WISH you success in a work which is so much suited to your genius; and in which I suppose you will, by way of notes, throw in some of your own knowledge and observations. You might allude to this more expressly in your advertisement than you have done. I do not doubt of your meeting with encouragement. I have myself the Paris edition in 12mo, but will probably wish to get it exchanged with yours when published. I know all you say of the former abominable translation to be true. I am, &c.

HUGH BLAIR.

It is difficult to say, by the want of date, whether the following critical letter from the same gentleman refers to the translation of **BUFFON**, or to the **Philosophy of Natural History**.

## No. CXXVI.

*Dr HUGH BLAIR to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,

*No date.*

I HAVE read over your preface with a good deal of care; and, instead of finding that it will require, as you say, much correction, I can find nothing in it to correct at all. It appears to me exceedingly well and accurately written, much amended from the preface or proposals which I saw before. At p. 19. you mention the late *ingenuous* Sir CHARLES LINNÆUS: I suppose this is an error of the press for *ingenious*. At p. 16. you say “incoherence is given by his observations.” We say very properly to give coherence; but to give incoherence, which is giving a negative, may be more dubious; perhaps “his observations are rendered incoherent” would be

safer. This observation, which is of the hypercritical kind, I have mentioned to show you that I read with attention. I am, &c.

HUGH BLAIR.

*P. S.*—I will be obliged to you for sending me Mr BARRONS book as soon as it is ready.

THE following letter, on the subject of the translation of BUFFON, is from the Rev. Dr JAMES MUIRHEAD, who was one of the writers in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review.

No. CXXVII.

*Rev. Dr JAMES MUIRHEAD to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR,

*No date.*

WE are all obliged to you for your excellent translation of Mons. BUFFONS book, and so is the author. It has really put abroad, not only the knowledge, but the taste of Natural History. And, though almost every body knew less or more of the original, yet, in a scientific book like the Counts, you may be assured ordinary French scholars were often at a loss.

I AM daily more and more of M. BUFFON'S opinion, that the number of animated bodies was originally fewer, or, at least, less various than at present. The Count and you are orthodox gentlemen. I am convinced that the cargo of our ancestor, NOAH, in the ark, was neither so cumbrous, nor so miscellaneous as some imagine. One would now almost question whether both birds and quadrupeds had not one stirps,—I mean respectively one for each genus.

ON Thursday last, on my way home from DUMFRIES, I met a tinker, one JOHN KENNEDY, now residing in Lochmaben parish. He had some budgets on the back of a horse, and others on a creature that did not seem entirely to resemble the former animal. His children led the beasts; and I took time to examine the latter animal till Kennedy came up. I asked him if it was a mule? He replied, with indifference, "No; but it is the foal of a mule, got by a Shetland sheltie." When I expressed some doubts of the fact, he spoke of this phenomenon in natural history as no mighty matter among gypsies; and assured me that, from repeated experiments among his brethren, the female mule

was easily impregnated by the horse, though the mare was never prolific from the embraces of the male mule. You remember what the Count says of the ram and the goat. I asked the fellow, who had the mule the mother of his mongrel ? He replied, ALEXANDER KENNEDY, tinker in Cannonby parish, his brother. I could have bought the *jumentum mirabile* from the vagrant, I believe, for ten shillings ; but told him I thought it was valuable, and did not chuse to impose upon him. He offered to make oath before me and Mr IRVINE of Gribton, who was by accident passing, that all he said was true. However, he offered a still more convincing proof, saying, That the mule and the foal had mostly gone hitherto in company, so that the foal, though near three years old, had not yet forgot sucking ; and he engaged to bring them both to Kelton-hill fair, and let us see the foal suck its mother, who was still in milk. I sent him off with strong injunctions to do as he said. It once entered into my head to have bought the mongrel, and to have offered it by letter to your friend the Count. But, if that could be supposed to bring an accession of credit to any one, I think that you yourself have the best title to it; and you

may take your resolutions as you thing proper. If you are of opinion, that either the Count, or any other virtuoso, would think the mule and foal worth their attention, I don't question but I can secure them both. As they are now *your literary property*, I do not think it worth any other persons while to interfere.

I SHALL tell you of another wonder equally authentic. A Turkey hen, belonging to JOHN BOYD of Milton, Esq. in this parish, about two years ago, became enamoured of a common cock, her own mate being dead. She laid eggs, and hatched ; but, to the astonishment of the family, brought out only common chickens. They were little heeded, and were all carried away by carrion crows, except one cock, which differs in no respect from the common gallinæ, except that he has a tuft of hair or feathers on his breast, like the flocon on the breast of a Turkey. This really looks as if the frame of animals were determined by the superior quantity of male or female semen. It is probable that if all the rest of the chickens had lived, they had been visibly all cocks. The matter, too, is no great help to MR DALGLIESHS proof of the sonship by animalcular generation. The cer-

tainty of the fact, however, is indisputable ; and may be proved by the oaths of all the family I mentioned to you. The Turkey hen and the cock are both alive. I have not distinctly examined the mongrel progeny, as it is but a short time since I heard of the marvel, and I only saw the cock once, and that at a distance in the fields.

EITHER Mr WILSON, bookseller in Dumfries, or I, did not get three volumes of BUFFON sent us. I wish Mr BALFOURS people would recollect by whom mine came. WILSON swears I took part of his, and he'll either cause me pay for what he wants, or withhold payment from Mr BALFOUR. Pray speak to the latter. I should be happy to hear from you ; and am, &c.

JAMES MUIRHEAD.

THERE is a well authenticated account of another prolific she mule, in 1780, recorded by Mr SMELLIE in the Philosophy of Natural History, Vol. II. p. 145, and in the 8th volume of his translation of BUFFON.

THE following letter from Mr JOHN REINOLD FORSTER, a Hanoverian literary gentle-

inan, who went round the world in one of COOKS voyages, in the character of naturalist, is in the repositories of MR SMELLIE; and, though it has no address, seems to have been written to MR SMELLIE on the subject of the translation of BUFFON, for which MR FORSTER evidently wished to be employed. But the strange dialect which he writes, under the pretence of English, shews that, however well qualified as a naturalist, he was quite unfit for conveying the eloquence and knowledge of BUFFON in an appropriate English dress. There were two MR FORSTERS, father and son, who both accompanied the immortal navigator COOK; this letter is from the father, who was author of a curious collection of early Voyages and Discoveries in the North.

## No. CXXVIII.

*Mr J. R. FORSTER to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

*Paddington Green, London,*  
SIR, *26th August; 1779.*

A GOOD English translation of M. de BUFFONS work on Natural History is, no doubt, a

very desirable thing. The excellence of a translation depends not only upon its faithfulness ; but, in order to make the work of universal and acknowledged utility, the imperfections of the original ought to be remedied, all falsehoods corrected, and all omissions supplied ; for the more truth a work of this nature contains, the more it may be depended upon, and the greater is its utility. The happy flow of eloquence observable in Count de BUFFONS works is more dangerous, because it causes they are more universally and more eagerly read ; they are like a beautiful woman of an unguarded conduct ; she may be in reality ever so virtuous, her free manner, and unguarded behaviour, and improper expressions, ever so little tinted with a kind of *non chalance*, raise in the minds of unguarded youths opinions highly disrespectful to the real character of that woman, and often excite irregular desires, which a more watchful conduct, and a more stern regard to decorum and virtue, would have prevented. Nature is really the greatest beauty, and a system of perfections : its history should never misrepresent her ; because it carries the reader astray from truth, beauty, and perfection. The imperfections of Count de Buf-

FONS work are either *misrepresentations* or *omissions*. The first are either caused by neglect or hastiness, and these are of less consequence,—or they are wilful, to conciliate nature to the ingenious Counts particular system and prejudices ; for though the Count is an excellent character, he bears the stamp of human nature in some parts. The omissions are likewise numerous in his performance ; to correct some of which M. de BUFFON has given us a volume of supplements, and has another volume preparing ; to which last I have had the honour to communicate some of my remarks at Count de BUFFONS pressing invitation, repeated to my son when he had the pleasure to converse with him in 1777 at Paris. I flatter myself to have seen a greater variety of the animal creation than most men, having had large and numerous opportunities of studying nature in various climates and continents of our globe, of seeing many curious collections during my travels, and of reading many curious performances which other men have not read, since I understand so many learned and modern languages. These accidental opportunities enable me, therefore, to judge with greater candour of M. de BUFFONS

work, and to observe its imperfections with more impartiality. I am willing and ready, if required, to give any corrections and additions which might serve to make the English edition of M. de BUFFONS work more accurate and more perfect. But as this would take up much of my time, it would be no more but equitable to have a proper retribution for the loss of such time as I should be obliged to appropriate to a work of this nature. A great many drawings of new and non-described animals could be likewise communicated by me, to make this collection more useful and complete,—if otherwise, the plan adopted would permit of it. I am, &c.

JOHN REINOLD FORSTER.

SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE, Lord Hailes of the Court of Session, the author of the *Annals of Scotland*, a work of unexampled accuracy and excellence, and of several other valuable performances, was a lawyer of unusual research and great ingenuity, and a highly respectable judge. From some unaccountable prejudices in matters respecting religion, his ideas seem to have occasionally

led him to narrow and confined views, almost approaching to bigotry, as exemplified in the following letter, in which he endeavoured to dissuade Mr SMELLIE from translating the works of BUFFON, on account of their irreligious tendency.

## No. CXXIX.

*Lord HAILES to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,

*Newhailes, 11th July 1779.*

I RECEIVED your proposals for publishing the Natural History of BUFFON. To make the work useful, a confutation of the atheistical parts of it ought to be added in the notes. Without that addition, it will do great hurt to an ignorant nation, already too much vitiated by French philosophy: It will be to make poison cheaper and more pleasant. My revered friend, Professor MONRO, held BUFFON in sovereign contempt, and ranged him in the class of the Indian philosophers with their bull and their tortoise.

Not many years ago there was published a book of travels: it had a run merely for its French philosophy; for it was ignorant beyond probability or even imagination. The authors of the Edinburgh Review were the only persons who, to my knowledge, confuted it; and yet they were represented as enemies of religion. This shows that it is dangerous to publish such books as those of **BUFFON**, when treatises of less merit are admired; and when confutations of such treatises are overlooked, because the confuters are ill thought of and traduced. But what can we say of an age which admires the blundering romances of **RAYNAL**? I am, &c.

DAVID DALRYMPLE.

THE following letter is taken from a copy in the hand-writing of Mr SMELLIE, having no date or address; but it was written in the joint names of Mr SMELLIE and Mr BELL the engraver of the plates for the translation of **BUFFON**, to Messrs WILLIAM STRAHAN and THOMAS CADELL of London, respecting the purchase by these gentlemen of one half of the copy-right of that translation.

## No. CXXX.

*To Messrs STRAHAN and CADELL, London.*

GENTLEMEN,

WE received yours of the 19th instant ; and entirely agree with you as to the 400 copies of BUFFON. With regard to one half of the property of the translation and plates, you mention that Mr CREECH agreed to let you have it for L.200. Messrs BELL and SMELLIE never heard of any such offer till they read your letter. Indeed Mr CREECH could not finish a transaction of that kind without the approbation of the other proprietors ; and he says that he remembers mentioning to you long ago, before the book was put to press, that he then considered L.200 as little enough for the half of the property of the translation, independent of the plates, which have actually cost us above L.700 Sterling ; but that he never could mean, now that the book has obtained so great a character, to make such an offer ; so that he apprehends you must have misunderstood him.

Now, Gentlemen, as we are very desirous of having no other London connexions but yourselves, Messrs BELL and SMELLIE have consulted some of your best friends in the trade here, who said that L.400, considering the vast expence of engraving and translating so great a work, was as little as could be expected for one half of the property. But we have such entire confidence in your honour, that we shall submit even this matter to your own determination. We are, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

ANDREW BELL.

THE following letters are upon the same subject ; but they stand quite isolated, as we have not the connected series of correspondence. Though the copy of the first has no address, it is obviously intended for Messrs STRAHAN and CADELL of London. The copy in the hand-writing of Mr SMELLIE is only signed by himself, but it seems to have been intended for a joint letter.

## No. CXXXI.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Messrs STRAHAN  
and CADELL, London.*

GENTLEMEN,

*No date.*

You mistake me exceedingly, if you imagine I could hesitate a moment with regard to completing your imperfect copies, if the setting up a *few* sheets will have that effect. But, as I mentioned in my last, *all* the imperfections, or waste sheets, were sent in the bale which contained the 300 copies of vol. 9. to be sold separately. This bale you received some weeks after the 946 sets arrived in London. I entreat you will take the trouble of causing your warehouse-man examine carefully into this matter; for I am thoroughly persuaded you will find in that bale all the sheets you want and many more; and I suspect you have never yet inspected that bale.

To prevent any unnecessary delay, the proprietors of BUFFON, Messrs BELL, CREECH, and SMELLIE hereby agree to the mode of settlement contained in yours of the 11th of this month. But Messrs BELL and SMELLIE

still expect the promised remuneration for their great labour in revising and improving the translation, and in re-engraving and touching up the plates. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

*N. B.*—Mr BELL is to receive his third share of the cash and bills personally, and Mr JOHN BALFOUR is to receive, by assignment, the whole of the remainder.

### No. CXXXII.

*From Messrs STRAHAN and CADELL to Mr  
WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,

*London, 26. March 1785.*

YOUR letter dated the 15th was received by Mr STRAHAN; and you must allow us to express no small degree of surprise at that part relating to the L.100 which we intended to present you and Mr BELL with, in case the impression of 1000 copies went off in two years. We refer you to ours of the 15th December 1783, in which we repeatedly declare that we do not consider this L.100 as any

part of our agreement, but as a douceur in case the impression should go off in two years from the publication, and not otherwise. Can any thing be more explicit? Judge then of our surprise at the contents of your last letter, in which you desire us to pay L.50 of the L.100, as Mr BELL, on the faith of receiving the L.100, has actually advanced you one moiety of that sum. We certainly meant that Mr CREECH was not to receive any part of the L.100, in case the same should be given.—We intended it as a complement to you and Mr BELL for any extra trouble you might have: but we also never had an idea of paying it but upon this express condition, that the sale of the impression did not extend beyond the two years. In fact, Sir, the price we are to give is so very high that our profit can be no object; and indeed so many disagreeable circumstances have arisen from this transaction, that we almost wish we had not engaged in it; the different parties making over their shares, giving no information of the same, and Mr BALFOUR writing frequently to know when we are to settle this last circumstance of the L.100. Permit us to observe, that we ought not to have been troubled with any private transactions between the par-

ties. When the impression was delivered to us, a mode of settlement should have been fixed; and the original partners in **BUFFON** ought to have adjusted their profits, and very considerable they must be, among themselves. We hope we now understand each other. We have ever endeavoured to be as reserved in matters of business; and this is the only way to make friends for a length of time. We hope we shall soon receive the impression: indeed it has been too long delayed. As to the Edinburgh booksellers, be so good as to subscribe the book among those whom you believe to be good men: the price must be 5s. 8d. per vol. in sheets; signing notes to Messrs **STRAHAN** and **CADELL** at six months date. You will let us know as soon as possible the exact number, and we will send the cuts for the eight volumes by land carriage. You have the cuts for the 9th vol. When the work is finished, you will state the account for printing: a separate account for the 9th vol. and Mr **Bell** for the plates. We doubt not but the whole business will be settled to mutual satisfaction. In this confidence, We remain, Sir, &c.

WILL. STRAHAN.

T. CADELL.

## No. CXXXIII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Messrs STRAHAN  
and CADELL.*

GENTLEMEN,      *Edinburgh, 27. Oct. 1785.*

WITH regard to the property and translation of volume 9th, I have deliberately considered the matter, and have likewise advised with some of your friends in the trade here. I shall, therefore, in consequence of their advice, endeavour to follow the idea given in your last. 1500 copies at 5s. 8d. amount to L.425. The printing, paper, engraving, &c. will not exceed L.125. Deduct these expences, and L.300 remain. Now, out of this last sum, I shall allow you L.50, and accept L.250 for both translation and property. This, I am advised, is a most equitable proposal; and have not a doubt that you will see it in the same light, and conclude the bargain without any farther argument.

I BEG leave to observe, however, that the ninth volume is not a mere translation; for,

besides the trouble of making a separate index, a considerable part of the volume consists of *narrative* and *abridgement*, which is a more difficult operation than translating.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CXXXIV.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Messrs STRAHAN  
and CADELL.*

GENTLEMEN,      *Edinburgh, 19. Sept. 1791.*

I HEAR that you are printing a new edition of **BUFFON**. I could have wished that you had given me an opportunity of reading the work over, with a view to correct it. If my information should happen to be wrong, I hope you will excuse me.

SINCE the publication of **BUFFON**, as many new quadrupeds have been discovered by **PALLAS**, **GMELIN**, and others, as would make an excellent additional volume. If this suggestion shall meet your approbation, I beg you would let me know soon.

I AM far advanced with the second and last volume of the Philosophy of Natural History. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

WHILE engaged in publishing the translation of BUFFON, the connexion in business which had long subsisted between Mr SMELLIE and Mr BALFOUR was dissolved; but we have no remaining memorials of the causes of this event. Mr BALFOUR, who had long been a very spirited and successful publishing bookseller, had now become old, and seems to have been rather inclined to contract his exertions in that way within a narrower compass; and he was, besides, deeply engaged in an extensive and thriving paper manufacture, which is still spiritedly carried on by his sons. On occasion of dissolving the connexion with Mr BALFOUR, Mr SMELLIE entered into partnership with Mr WILLIAM CREECH, the successor of the late Mr ALEXANDER KINCAID. Mr CREECH was then a young man, and in the vigorous prosecution of an extensive and rising business as a publishing bookseller, and was possessed of much valuable literary property. This new

company began business on the 14th September 1782, under the firm of CREECH and SMELLIE. On this subject the following letter gives some elucidations. From its date in February 1783, one would be apt to suppose that this connexion had not then actually taken place ; but as we are well assured that it really commenced in September 1782, the date of this letter, in the copy which still remains, is probably a mistake for February 1782, as it appears to have been written pending the negociation with Mr CREECH, and while the connexion with Mr BALFOUR still subsisted.

## No. CXXXV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr WILLIAM CREECH.

*Edinburgh, February 6. 1783.*

DEAR SIR,

ACCORDING to my promise, I send you a view of the state of BALFOUR and SMELLIES affairs, which I have made as short and as clear as possible.

MR BALFOUR has work at present in the printing-house to a considerable amount, and is owing just now about L.50. He is to continue to employ the house for all his work, which will gradually diminish the sum due to him. He is also to take assignations, and to recover some of the accounts, which will save the expence of factorage to Mr STRACHAN. With regard to time, Mr BALFOUR, in his letter to me, offers four years in equal payments, till the whole is paid off.

THE mode I propose for paying off Mr BALFOUR, and the sooner the better for us, is, that all the accounts, except such as Mr BALFOUR takes in part payment, shall instantly be put under Mr STRACHANS management, and an advertisement to that purpose put into the newspapers, which will forward the settlement of the accounts even with the worst payers; and such as are refractory must be included in one general summons, so that the whole may be effectually and speedily recovered.

ALL we have to do at present is to find caution that Mr BALFOUR and the debts due by the printing-house shall be paid in four

years. To accomplish this first step, and to prevent Mr BALFOUR from knowing of our intended connexion before the bargain is fully settled, caution must be found in my name; and you and I shall give the person or persons our mutual obligation that the money shall never affect them. This mode is, I think, the most simple that can be devised, and the most easily accomplished.

CONSIDERING the prodigious quantity of business now carrying on, and the debts due to the printing-house, together with the hardness of Mr BALFOUR, his offer, and the terms of payment, are surprisingly moderate. As no time should be lost in finishing the transaction, I beg you will consider the matter soon. I refer you to the scroll of a contract in your possession for farther particulars. If any queries occur, I am always ready to solve them.

Now, Sir, if this connexion is formed, which I am perfectly certain will be a great mutual advantage, I hope that nothing shall be left undetermined, but that every thing shall be clearly and explicitly committed to writing, which will effectually prevent any

future misunderstandings. In this case, as I can fully rely on the peaceableness of my own disposition, I cannot help thinking that neither of us will ever have occasion to repent, far less to quarrel. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

THIS partnership was dissolved on the last day of December 1789; and on the first of January 1790, Mr SMELLIE began to carry on business entirely on his own account. During the life of Lord KAMES, Mr SMELLIE enjoyed a cash account, as formerly mentioned, by the favour of that valuable friend, who died in December 1782. After the dissolution of his copartnery with Mr CREECH, he again found it necessary to resort to a similar measure for accommodation, and made application for this purpose to the late Lord GARDENSTON. The letter he wrote on this occasion to that respectable Senator of the College of Justice, gives a general outline of his own life, and is therefore here inserted.

## No. CXXXVI.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Lord GARDENSTON.*

MY LORD,      *Edinburgh, 20th Sept. 1790.*

EVER since I had the honour of being slightly known to your Lordship, I have felt an instinctive propensity to think that you wished to be of service to me. This may be the effect of vanity. However, I cannot refrain from laying before your Lordship a very short view of my history, and of my present situation.

AT the age of less than fourteen years, I had neither father nor mother, but was bound an apprentice to Messrs HAMILTON and BALFOUR, as a printer. Two years afterwards, instead of an apprentice at three shillings a-week, I was made corrector to the printing-house at ten shillings a-week. This circumstance enabled me to maintain myself and two sisters, till they both died of consumptions. Messrs HAMILTON and BALFOUR, whom I shall ever revere, perceived my natural avi-

dity for knowledge ; and, before my apprenticeship was finished, allowed me three hours a-day to attend the different Professors of the University.

NOT satisfied with the ordinary course of the college, I afterwards, when receiving forty-two pounds a-year as corrector to Messrs MURRAY and COCHRAN, attended MONRO, and all the other medical professors, as your Lordship must perceive from my acknowledged works.

LIKE a fool ! but a fool of nature, I married at the age of twenty-two. Thirteen children were produced, ten of whom are now alive. I have had no connexion in partnership with any person since the first of January last. My business is every day increasing; and I am gradually getting out of difficulties.

As the late Dr GILBERT STUART used to say to people who were telling long stories,— *Rush to the point !* I now rush to the point. I find my family can be supported at a very moderate expence, and fully within the reach of my business, if I had the command of a

cash account for two or three hundred pounds with my real friend Sir WILLIAM FORBES. This is laconic work ; but if your Lordship shall feel any impropriety in the application, you must blame the generosity and benevolence of your own character.

I STILL continue to worship your Lordships saint. Upon me he has performed the miracle of regeneration. From gratitude, therefore, I shall always pay my devotion to St BERNARD, and my penny to GEORGE MURDOCH. I have the honour, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

It may be proper to mention, that the allusion in the concluding paragraph of this letter refers to a mineral spring a very short way to the north of Edinburgh, called St BERNARD'S Well, over which Lord GARDENSTON built a very handsome temple, with a statue of HYGEIA. GEORGE MURDOCH was the keeper, and was entitled to a penny from each visitor for serving out the salubrious draught. The water is impregnated with sulphurated hydrogen gas, and holds carbo-

nate of lime in solution. It is much resorted to; and is believed salutary in disorders of the eyes, herpetic eruptions, and dyspeptic complaints, or what are ordinarily called indigestion, and diseases of the stomach. This spring holds no metallic or saline matter in solution, as, when boiled, it becomes exceedingly pure soft water.

HIS application was successful; and Lord GARDENSTON became his security according to Sir WILLIAM FORBES and Co. On this occasion Mr SMELLIE wrote the following letter of acknowledgement to his Lordship.

### No. CXXXVII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Lord GARDENSTON.*

*Edinburgh, 17th October 1790.*

MY LORD,

YOUR generosity to me would have astonished any man who was unacquainted with the greatness of your Lordships mind. To me, though of infinite importance, it brought

a calm pleasure, but no surprise. I have the honour, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

BEGINNING the world without patrimony, and having carried on business for the greater part of his life in copartneries, Mr SMELLIE had been accustomed to rely on his more wealthy partners for the pecuniary arrangements necessary to his business, and appears to have been rather negligent in accounts, and perhaps confided too much in the accuracy of others. On the dissolution of his partnership with Mr CREECH, during the continuance of which a vast deal of printing business had been executed for that eminent bookseller, a long arrear of account remained unsettled, and each of the parties believed that a considerable balance was due in his own favour. This ended in an arbitration ; and a balance was ultimately found due by Mr CREECH to Mr SMELLIE ; but the decision was not pronounced until some time after the death of Mr SMELLIE.

Mr SMELLIE, in the latter part of his life, became exceedingly distressed for want of

money ; and it appears that, in the commencement of 1795, he had exhausted and overdrawn the credit account which he held in the banking-house of Sir WILLIAM FORBES and Co. of which circumstance that most worthy and respectable Baronet had apprised him by letter, intimating the necessity of replacement. To this the following was the answer.

### No. CXXXVIII.

MR WILLIAM SMELLIE to Sir WILLIAM FORBES, *Bart.*

SIR WILLIAM, Edin. 1st Feb. 1795.

I RECEIVED yours; and I am exceedingly sorry to find that I have overdrawn the account in your house, which I obtained by the influence of my most ingenious, respectable, and worthy friend ; and I would not for the universe that he should be disturbed about that account.

IT is proper that I should tell you that several booksellers are considerably indebted to me, from whom I have been unable to pro-

secure payment, by which means I am at present reduced to unpleasant difficulties. In my situation, I think it both just and honourable to be explicit. I presume to go farther; and to solicit you to be my surety for the balance of the above mentioned account, till I shall be enabled to pay you by the liquidation of these accounts.

I now change this most disagreeable subject to tell you, that my *second* and last volume of the Philosophy of Natural History has been finished two or three months ago. Our Mr JOHN BELL, bookseller, has written to the London booksellers about the price they may chuse to give for the copy-right. The price of the *first* volume was a thousand guineas, and the same sum is asked for the *second*; but Mr BELL has not yet got a response.

As I cannot endure the torture of idleness, I have begun, and I am proceeding with another work, which I consider to be the most instructive and most useful branch of Natural History. A general biography is well: But I confine my biography to such authors

as I had the honour of being personally acquainted with, viz. Lord KAMES, DAVID HUME, ADAM SMITH, &c. &c. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

IN the original of this letter to Sir WILLIAM FORBES, Mr. SMELLIE entered into some confidential explanations respecting certain disputed accounts, on which, in his opinion, large balances were due to him, and owing to which his existing difficulties had compelled him to overdraw his cash-account in the banking-house of which that most respectable and worthy Baronet was the head. But, in conformity with our views of propriety, we have preferred to leave the apology of Mr SMELLIE on this occasion abrupt and inconclusive, rather than to open up disputes now long at rest, or to run the hazard of wounding the feelings of those persons or their relatives by *ex parte* disclosures, that could only gratify unjustifiable curiosity, without serving any useful purpose whatever.

THE late celebrated Dr BEATTIE, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of

Aberdeen, well known to the world as the author of an ingenious and much admired poem, *The MINSTREL*, or the *Prōgress of Genius*, and of an *Essay on Truth*, in answer to some of the *Essays* of *DAVID HUME* the celebrated philosopher and historian, was the intimate friend of the late Sir *WILLIAM FORBES*, who, only a short period before his own death, consecrated the memory of his departed friend by an extensive biographical *Memoir* of considerable merit and interest. In the year 1787, Dr *BEATTIE* published a small volume entitled, *Evidences of the Christian Religion*, which was printed by Mr *SMELLIE*. Owing to various interruptions, to which all printing houses in Edinburgh are peculiarly liable, especially occasioned by the pressure of printing law-papers, this book happened to be considerably longer in the press than Dr *BEATTIE* had reason to expect ; and the Doctor wrote to Mr *SMELLIE*, complaining much of the delay. To this remonstrance, Mr *SMELLIE* returned an answer, which pleased Dr *BEATTIE* so much by the ingenuity of the apologies which it contained, and by its composition in general, that, besides expressing himself perfectly satisfied with the causes assigned for delaying his book, he transmitted

Mr SMELLIES letter to Sir WILLIAM FORBES as a curiosity. Sir WILLIAM FORBES gave this letter to the late Mr ROBERT ARBUTHNOT, Secretary to the Trustees for Promoting Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland, a gentleman of much ingenuity and extensive knowledge in literature, who kept it long in his pocket, and shewed it about among his friends and acquaintances.

THE following curious incident in the life of Mr SMELLIE rests on the authority of his family, to whom he related all the particulars, and is fully confirmed by the perfect recollection of the fact by a respectable old lady of the name of M'COULL, who is still in life, and is a cousin of the late Mr SMELLIE.

HELEN SMELLIE, the daughter of Mr SMELLIES grandfather, and sister to his father, married WILLIAM FIDLER, one of the clerks in the Exchequer of Scotland. In 1745, WILLIAM FIDLER warmly espoused the cause of the CHEVALIER DE ST GEORGE, in his unsuccessful attempt to recover the throne of these realms for his father, the representative of the forfeited STUART race. Mr FIDLER even contrived to raise some men for the service of

Prince **CHARLES EDWARD**, and joined in the rebellion. After the battle of Culloden, he was forced to make his escape into France, and was accompanied by his wife. They there changed their name, and resided in France for fourteen years in distressed circumstances. On the death of her husband in 1760, **HELEN SMELLIE** returned to Edinburgh in very great poverty. Becoming old and much distressed, Mr **SMELLIE** used the liberty to represent her situation by letter to the Prince, enumerating the services which her husband had performed to him when in Scotland, and narrating their subsequent distresses, and her extreme age and poverty. The Prince answered the letter with great politeness ; acknowledged his perfect recollection of the services of Mr **FIDLER** ; and remitted thirty pounds for the relief of the old lady, promising to repeat it annually during his life ; but he died soon afterwards. The Prince's letter was written in the French language, and both the original and translation were given by Mr **SMELLIE** to his venerable aunt **HELEN SMELLIE**. Every possible enquiry and search has been made to recover this real curiosity, but unfortunately without effect ; so that this

interesting anecdote must rest on the oral testimony already mentioned.

Mr SMELLIE long cultivated an intimate friendship with Mr WILLIAM GREENLAW, who had gone through the usual theological studies, and had taken orders in the church of Scotland ; but, instead of soliciting, even refused a living when offered, and devoted his time almost exclusively to the study of the learned languages, which he taught as his only means of subsistence. In the course of their intimate acquaintance, Mr SMELLIE and Mr GREENLAW solemnly entered into a singular agreement, which was reduced to writing, signed with their blood, and formally sealed by both parties, in which they mutually engaged that whoever might die first, should return, if possible, and give an account to the other of the circumstances of the world of spirits ; under a proviso that, if the deceased did not return by the expiration of twelve months, it was to be concluded that he was not permitted to come back. Mr GREENLAW died on the 26th of June 1774. When the year subsequent to his death was near a close, Mr SMELLIE became exceedingly anxious about the expected visit. After losing

several nights sleep successively, in watching for the re-appearance of his deceased friend, Mr SMELLIE fell fast asleep one evening in his elbow chair ; when, in a dream, he saw a vision of Greenlaw, in the ordinarily received costume of a ghost, all dressed in white, &c. This phantom of imagination, addressing him in an impressive solemnity of tone, informed him, “ That he had experienced great difficulty in procuring permission to return to this earth according to their agreement; that he was now in a much better world than the one he had left ; and yet that the hopes and wishes of its inhabitants were by no means satisfied, as, like those of the lower world, they still looked forward in the hope of eventually reaching a still happier state of existence.”

THIS dream completely satisfied Mr SMELLIE, and removed from his mind all anxiety on the subject of the agreement. He afterwards shewed this singular contract, and related the story of the apparition to the late learned Lord MONBODDO ; who observed, “ That there could not be the smallest reasonable doubt or hesitation in believing that GREENLAW *did actually appear !*”

ON occasion of Mr GREENLAWS death, Mr SMELLIE wrote the following character or account of him, which was inserted in the obituary of the Edinburgh Magazine and Review for June 1774.

“ ON the 26th day of June 1774, died Mr WILLIAM GREENLAW, preacher of the Gospel, in the sixty-third year of his age. Though he followed not the profession to which he was bred, he was deeply skilled in Theology. The few discourses he composed, discovered an abundance of matter that would have sparkled through entire volumes of modern sermons. His views also in Astronomy, and in all the branches of Mathematics, were profound and uncommon. But he meant chiefly to distinguish himself by his knowledge of the learned languages. The study of them was the great object of his life; and the progress he made in them was proportioned to his acuteness and assiduity. He taught them privately in Edinburgh above twenty years; and there was so little jealousy in his character, that he freely bestowed his knowledge on those teachers who wished to profit by his communications. What peculiarly distin-

guished him was a flow of inoffensive humour; a gift rarely possessed by the natives of Scotland. His heart was warm and open; his social spirit unbounded. Of money he professed entire contempt, and he refused a living which his friends would have pressed upon him. With an ambition to excel, he was yet careless of his reputation. Conscious of his own merit, he allowed men to judge of him as they pleased. His manners were simple; his figure ungainly. In a licentious age, he made a vow of chastity; and, what is more surprising, he kept it. The last years of his life were rather unfortunate. The constant use he had made of his faculties seemed to have impaired them; but he had not the misery to survive their extinction. Death came to him when his friends wished for it."

At the particular request of GREENLAW, MR SMELLIE wrote a Latin letter of invitation to the friends of the deceased to attend the funeral, of which the following is a copy.

## No. CXXXIX.

**GULIELMUS SMELLIUS, JACOBO CUMMINO ;  
S. P. D.**

**DIE** solis VI. Kal. Jul. **GULIELMUS GREEN-  
LAUS, Evangelii Concionator, et linguarum  
eruditarum, quas in primis callebat, Doctor,  
diem supremum obiit.**

DOMUM igitur, ubi cadaver ejus in Platea  
Bristolensi jacet, die Martis, hora post meri-  
diem quinta, ut petas ; inde, ad tumulum, in  
Fratrum Franciscanorum coemetrio, funus  
comiteris ; et viri, ingenio, doctrina, sim-  
plicitate, opum ac gloriolae humanae con-  
temptu, memorabilis, reliquiis extremum  
honorem habeas ; amicum amicus obsecro.  
Vale.

*Die Lunae V. Kal. Jul.  
An. MDCCLXXIV.*

*Translation of the foregoing Letter.*

WILLIAM SMELLIE to JAMES CUMMING, *wisheth  
health.*

ON Sunday the sixth of the Kalends of July, 26 June, died WILLIAM GREENLAW, Preacher of the Gospel, and Doctor in the learned languages, which he studied above all things.

As his friend, therefore, I entreat you his friend to repair to the house in Bristol-street where his body lies, on Tuesday at five o'clock in the afternoon; and thence to accompany his funeral to the grave in the burying ground of the Gray Friars, that you may do the last honour to the remains of a man renowned for ingenuity, learning, and simplicity; who ever held riches and human vanity in contempt!

*Monday, the fifth of the Kalends  
of July 1774, 27th June.*

ONE of these funeral letters happened to be sent to a gentleman who was then a Bailie or Magistrate of Edinburgh, an office precisely similar to that of Alderman in London. The worthy Bailie, though a very respectable man, was no scholar : but, seeing the name of Mr SMELLIE at the letter, and recollecting some tolerably severe animadversions which he had published against the conduct of the Magistrates in their borough politics, he immediately concluded that this was a fresh attack ; and, shewing the burial letter to some of his brethren in the Council Chamber, he observed, “ that he supposed this was another *skit* by SMELLIE on the Town Council !”

THAT GREENLAW held riches in perfect contempt is undoubted.—The moment he got a fee for teaching, he carried it home to an old woman with whom he lodged ; and, after giving her the money, he inquired no more about it, leaving to her the uncontrolled management of his small domestic economy.

IN 1779, the late illustrious Lawyer, Judge, Antiquary, and Historian, Sir DAVID DALRYMPLE of Hailes, Bart. formerly mentioned, one of the Judges of the two Supreme Scots

Courts of Session and Justiciary, by the title of **Lord HAILES**, employed Mr SMELLIE to print his most excellent Annals of Scotland, then first published in two volumes quarto. On this occasion the following letters were written by **Lord HAILES** to Mr SMELLIE. Any relicts of so great a man deserve preservation.

## No. CXL.

*Lord HAILES to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR, *Newhailes, 19 January 1779.*

I RETURN you the title page and the advertisement with my observations: They are of more consequence to you as a printer than to me as an author. I imagine, however, that upon examination you will find them just; and I should be sorry to see any thing issue from your press which might incur the censure of artists.

WHAT I am now to speak of regards myself very nearly, and that is as to getting the copies ready to be sent to London. If

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they do not go by the first ships, they might as well remain in your warehouse till the meeting of the next session of Parliament; and therefore I must intreat you diligently and punctually to observe my instructions.

THREE hundred copies in sheets must be safely packed up and sent by the first ships with convoy, addressed to Mr JOHN MURRAY, bookseller, No. 32, Fleet street, London. A bill of loading must be taken, which, by course of post, you will transmit to Mr MURRAY. When I say packed up, I mean such package, in boxes or otherwise, as is used on the occasion of transmitting books from Edinburgh to London.

By the next conveyance afterwards, that is, by the next subsequent convoy, you will transmit two hundred and fifty copies to the same address, and in like manner.

You will send fifty copies to Mr SMEATON, bookbinder, and desire him to do them up in blue paper covers with all possible expedition, and send them to the Advocates Library, where they will be called for. I think that these copies should be done up as I have seen

bulky session-papers of late, without paste, except in small stripes of vellum: I know not the term of art, but what I mean serves as a sort of band or guard on the back of the sheets. I am, &c.

DAV. DALRYMPLE.

No. CXLI.

*Lord HAILES to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,

*Newhailes, 21. Jan. 1779:*

I AM much obliged to you for your attention as to shipping the copies, &c. I believe the convoy is on its passage; but the man-of-war, after seeing the ships into the Frith, is to proceed to the north with the rest of the trade, and then to come back here to take the Leith trade to the Thames.

WHAT you say of the manner in which my first volume was treated by the reviewers agrees much with my own sentiments. *Two* of the English reviewers chose the very driest part of the book by way of specimen; and the *third* threw it into the Monthly Catalogue

with political pamphlets and flimsy novels. Notwithstanding all this, I have the satisfaction of learning that the book was well received in England ; and if I were to mention to you the particular persons who distinguished it with their approbation, you would have reason to ascribe much vanity to me. As to the reviewer in this country, I have reason to believe he volunteered in the affair.

PERHAPS, when it is known that he volunteered his work, and I am not to enter upon the history of the STUARTS, people will think better of what I have done for the history of Scotland. It would have been an easy matter for me to have been more diffuse and rhetorical, but in that manner of writing I have not indulged myself. As to what you mention in the end of your letter, it is a matter of considerable delicacy. I am however obliged to you for your friendly suggestion ; and am,

Sir, your most obliged humble servant,

DAV. DALRYMPLE.

MR SMELLIE was many years sole printer of the Latin Dissertations, or Inaugural Theses on some topic of medicine, or of the sci-

ences connected with the healing art, which are printed and defended publicly by all the candidates for the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh. Indeed he was eminently qualified for this employment beyond any other printer of his time ; as, besides being an excellent and experienced Latin scholar, he had studied medicine and all its allied sciences at the University, and was himself qualified, in all respects, for undergoing the ordeal of medical graduation. Having lost a part of this business, which is in itself more honourable than profitable, in consequence of several of the candidates, during successive seasons, chusing to employ other printers, he wrote the following note to the late Mr NICOL, one of the masters or teachers in the public grammar school of Edinburgh, usually called the *High School*.

## No. CXLII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr WILLIAM NICOL,  
High School.*

DEAR SIR,      *Edinburgh, 2. August 1790.*

OUR very old friends the Medical Theses long remained in a concentrated state. Like oxygen and the other gases, in this more enlightened age, they are now decomposed into three or four component elements. But if you shall chuse to exert your chemical talents in my favour, you will soon reduce them to their former cumulative mass. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

MR NICOL, to whom this note was addressed, besides being complete master of the Latin language, had acquired a competent knowledge of medicine, and was much employed among the medical students attending the University to brush up their rusted classical knowledge, to enable them to undergo their examinations for the degree of Doctor, all

these examinations being carried on in the Latin language. He used likewise to assist them in correcting their Latin theses ; many of which were translated by him into Latin from English dissertations written by the students, who distrusted their own classical erudition ; and even some of them were entirely of his composition. This connexion between Mr NICOL and the medical students explains the reason of the application made to him by Mr SMELLIE on this occasion, as it naturally gave him considerable influence on the minds of his pupils in their choice of a printer ; and may serve as a key to the chemical allusions in the note, which have reference to the then new Lavoisierian chemistry, by which many substances, before considered as simple bodies, had been resolved into several elements by analysis, but which the skilful chemist could again synthetically recombine.

THE kind of university tutor, in which capacity Mr NICOL was employed, and which is the only one known at Edinburgh, being entirely of a private nature, unsanctioned by any of the University statutes, is well-known

at Edinburgh under the cant names of a Grinder or Doctor-maker. The tutor and pupil meet at stated times in private, when they read Latin books on the various subjects connected with medicine, and carry on conversations in the Latin language on medical topics, as nearly as possible resembling the ordinary course of examination before the professors, that the candidates may be prepared to undergo their trials with competent readiness, both as to language and ideas. There is another excellent institution among the medical students at Edinburgh, which tends greatly to excite them to emulation in a knowledge of their professional studies. In their societies, besides dissertations and disputations in English on medical topics, including the connected sciences, they have all, in their regular turns, to write short Latin papers or essays, which are impugned and defended in Latin debates, *viva voce*.

IN the years 1778 and 1779, MR SMELLIE published a selection from the medical theses which had appeared at Edinburgh, in two successive octavo volumes, under the title of **THESAURUS MEDICUS**; and to each of these volumes he affixed a well written Latin Pre-

face of his own composition, giving a neat and appropriate account of the nature, objects, and motives of the work. In the first volume, he brought down the series of this selection from the year 1726, when the first regular medical diploma was conferred by the University of Edinburgh, to the year 1750. In the second volume, he continued the series from the year 1750 to the year 1758 ; and he probably intended to have carried on the selection in successive volumes down to his own time : But the Royal Medical Society, a very respectable assemblage of the medical students, took the task from his hands, by publishing, in two other successive volumes, a similar selection, from 1759 to 1784, both inclusive. As in all these four volumes, besides the theses selected for publication, there are full lists of the whole graduates who acquired the degree of doctor in each successive year, together with the titles of all their theses, or the subjects of their respective dissertations, these four volumes exhibit a curious and interesting view of the progress of the University of Edinburgh in acquiring celebrity as a school of medicine, in which its character is now, and has long been, unrivalled. It may be noticed, that

every candidate for the degree of Doctor in Medicine at this University, besides having attended the lectures of all the Professors of the Medical Faculty, must have spent three full sessions either there, or at some other university having a regular medical school. They must likewise undergo several examinations in private before all the medical Professors, and have publicly to defend their thesis upon a medical subject, or one in some of the sciences connected with medicine, before the whole assembled University, Principal, Professors, and Students.

FROM the records of the University we have extracted the respective numbers of medical graduations, in all the successive years from 1726 to 1810, both inclusive, a period of 85 years ; and have divided the whole into periods of ten years each, giving the total number of graduations in each period, and the yearly average of each. The Faculty of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh was instituted in the year 1726 ; since which all candidates for the degree of Doctor in Medicine have gone through the private and public trials or examinations already mentioned. Before that period, medical degrees

were sometimes granted by the University, but without the candidates being required to publish and defend a Thesis. Of these former graduations, we only know of 21 having taken place in the first twenty-five years of the eighteenth century.

*List of Medical Graduations at Edinburgh from 1726 to 1810, both inclusive.*

Years.	No. of Graduates.	Years.	No. of Graduates.	Years.	No. of Graduates.
1726	1	1736	1	1746	5
1727	0	1737	2	1747	3
1728	0	1738	2	1748	7
1729	0	1739	0	1749	11
1730	1	1740	4	1750	12
1731	6	1741	0	1751	12
1732	2	1742	3	1752	8
1733	1	1743	1	1753	18
1734	3	1744	4	1754	13
1735	1	1745	3	1755	17
$1\frac{1}{2}$ aver.	15	2 average	20	10.6 average	106
1756	7	1766	17	1776	18
1757	7	1767	12	1777	27
1758	9	1768	15	1778	32
1759	6	1769	17	1779	25
1760	5	1770	22	1780	23
1761	7	1771	18	1781	20
1762	7	1772	20	1782	19
1763	10	1773	11	1783	25
1764	7	1774	16	1784	29
1765	13	1775	22	1785	22
7.8 aver.	78	17 average	170	24 average	240

<i>Years. No. of Graduates.</i>	<i>Years. No. of Graduates.</i>	<i>Years. No. of Graduates.</i>
1786 35	1796 31	1806 37
1787 44	1797 46	1807 52
1788 28	1798 49	1808 51
1789 25	1799 52	1809 57
1790 32	1800 50	1810 55
1791 22	1801 36	—
1792 31	1802 46	50.4 average 252
1793 40	1803 50	
1794 29	1804 49	
1795 44	1805 60	
—	—	
33 aver. 330	47 average 469	

THE foregoing list only gives an account of the progressive increase in the reputation of the University of Edinburgh, as a medical school; but it has very greatly advanced as a place of general education likewise. It were tedious, perhaps, to give a general account of this University for the whole of the former period; but the following view of its progress, during the last 20 years, may gratify curiosity; which comparative view is abstracted from the Additional Appendix to Professor CRAWFORDS History of the University of Edinburgh, just republished by Dr ANDREW DUNCAN, sen. Professor of the Institutes of Medicine. The annual sessions of this University commence about the beginning of November, and the winter courses terminate about the beginning of May. A short summer session then com-

ences for Botany, and some other sciences, which ends about the first of August. The University is divided into four Faculties, Arts, Medicine, Law, and Divinity ; the first of these comprehending the learned languages, philosophy, mathematics, and the physical sciences ; and the last includes theology, church history, and oriental languages. A separate list is annually formed of the students attending upon each faculty, so that some students may be entered in more than one ; but these are not very numerous, and are perhaps compensated for by those who neglect to have their names entered or matriculated at all. In the subsequent list, we have distinguished the sessions by the years of their respective commencements.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Arts.</i>	<i>Medicine.</i>	<i>Law.</i>	<i>Divinity.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
1790	463	517	131	134	1245
1791	473	547	129	129	1279
1792	453	581	142	133	1309
1793	464	527	124	137	1252
1794	470	525	154	146	1295
1795	427	508	143	140	1218
1796	496	577	156	130	1359
1797	471	591	154	125	1341
1798	461	592	124	125	1302
1799	472	636	97	125	1330
1800	447	640	116	125	1332
1801	500	661	108	131	1400

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Arts.</i>	<i>Medicine.</i>	<i>Law.</i>	<i>Divinity.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
1802	522	740	117	130	1509
1803	506	681	113	120	1420
1804	550	662	113	125	1450
1805	629	703	113	125	1570
1806	642	764	143	125	1674
1807	672	826	157	115	1770
1808	723	838	152	120	1833
1809	805	876	169	130	1979

MR SMELLIE was for many years printer to the Faculty of Advocates, and of course printed all the law theses, which constitute, somewhat in the manner of those already mentioned in regard to medicine, a formal part of the prescribed exercises connected with the examinations of law students, before they are admitted to practice at the Scots bar; but, while the medical theses are regular dissertations on a subject in or connected with medicine, the law theses are purely and simply what their name imports, a dry series of formal propositions, intended as the topics of disputation on some heads of the civil law, but which are not disputed. From holding the office of printer to the Faculty of Advocates, which is still enjoyed by his son, it became part of his employment to print all additions to the catalogue of the magnificent and invaluable library belonging

to that numerous, learned, and respectable body.

THESE circumstances may perhaps appear somewhat trivial even in the memoirs of a printer ; yet it is certainly of very material importance to every author who has to print a work in the learned languages, or upon learned subjects, that his printer should have at least a competent knowledge of the language and subject of the performance, lest blunders of the grossest nature should intrude into the work ; for an author, who is not very minutely conversant in the mysteries of the typographical art, is extremely apt to overlook apparently trifling errors of very material importance. A very curious instance of the necessity of accurate attention to typographical correction occurred, not many years ago, in the course of printing an inaugural medical theses : In the concluding paragraph of his dissertation, a young medical graduate, willing to pay a handsome compliment to his instructors, inserted a well drawn valedictory address to the Professors, in which a very slight blunder of his printer made him say, in fine flowing language, that his remembrance of them, and of their excellent

prelections, should remain impressed on his mind through life, *nunquam sine maxime horrore*, to the prodigious dismay of the young doctor, when the error was discovered too late for correction, but to the great amusement of his companions.

YET, however necessary it certainly is for the master or corrector of a printing-house to possess a competent knowledge for ensuring accuracy in the work which goes through their hands, it singularly happens that, in the more purely mechanical part of the printing business, the composing or setting up the types, it would seem to be as well at least, perhaps better, that the compositor should rather have no knowledge at all, as a slight and imperfect one, of the language which he is employed to set up in types. Of this a very curious instance occurred in Mr SMELLIES printing-house, which the author of these pages well remembers to have heard related by Mr SMELLIE. A good many years ago, Mr SMELLIE was employed to print, for the Society for Propagating the Gospel in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, a translation of the Sacred Scriptures into the Gaelic language, for the use of the Scots

Highlanders, many of whom do not possess a sufficient knowledge of English to enable them to understand the Bible in our language. When first employed in this work, as he was himself utterly ignorant of Gaelic, he sedulously procured a compositor whose native language that was, under the idea that such a man would be best fitted for the task. The Gaelic orthography happens to be most singularly different from that of the English language, and directed by certain rules that are dependent upon an intimate knowledge of its grammatical construction, and the etymology of its words, not at all obvious to ordinary unlearned men. In reading the MS. the highland compositor felt no difficulty ; but, between committing a few words to memory, and reducing these, letter by letter, into arranged types, he forgot the peculiar orthography, in which he was quite unlearned, and set up the types just as the words seemed to him to require letters to indicate their tones or sounds : and all his knowledge of the science of orthographizing sounds had been acquired in learning to read English in Scots schools. The reverend and learned Gaelic translator was quite horrified with the miserable and unintelligible blunder-

ing of the Highland compositor ; and upon investigation of the cause, it was found indispensably necessary to set the Gaelic compositor to do English works, and to employ a journeyman printer who did not know one word of the language, to set up or compose the Gaelic Bible, and who accordingly composed it with great accuracy.

ON this subject it may be observed, that Mr SMELLIE had been in use to receive some advance of money on commencing to print every successive volume of the Gaelic Bible, to which the following letter refers. The late Rev. Dr JOHN KEMP, to whom it was addressed, was long Secretary to the Society for Propagating the Gospel, in which office he had succeeded to the Rev. Dr. JOHN M'FARLANE, and executed the duties of that office with much intelligent zeal and fidelity. The commencement of the letter complimentarily alludes to a journey which Dr KEMP had recently made through the Highlands and isles of Scotland, at the desire of the Society to which he was Secretary, for the purpose of examining into the condition of the missions and schools, which are established in different parts under the patronage

and at the expence of that excellent and highly beneficial institution, and to report upon fit stations for the establishment of additional missionaries and schools.

## No. CXLIII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to the Rev. Dr JOHN KEMP.*

REV. SIR, *Edinburgh, 23. September 1791.*

I LEARN with much pleasure, that you are happily arrived from a dangerous, but important expedition ; and I hope that we shall soon see your observations on the numerous objects you must have examined.

THE purpose of my giving you the trouble of this letter is simple ; but to me, at present, interesting in a high degree. My late worthy and respectable friend, Dr JOHN M'FARLANE, when ever I began to print a volume of the Gaelic Bible, gave me a draught on Mr DAVIDSON for L.30. Sterling. It is now a considerable time since I laid out money upon this volume, and beg leave to intreat your attention to this circumstance.

I claim not this as a right ; but I rely with confidence in your friendly dispositions ; and I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

MR SMELLIE possessed uncommon readiness and accuracy in correcting proof sheets. Even in the Latin and French languages, he could attend at once to their accurate orthography and grammatical construction, and to the punctuation and minute niceties of typographical precision, while a boy was reading the manuscript to him as quickly as possible. The present Mr WILLIAM WADDEL, the active and intelligent Manager of the vast concerns of the Kings Printers and Stationers for Scotland, served his apprenticeship to Mr SMELLIE, and was some years afterwards a journeyman in his printing house. While an apprentice, young WADDEL, being both an excellent scholar and an uncommonly quick and accurate reader, was always selected to read the manuscripts of the medical and law Theses, which are all in the Latin language, to Mr SMELLIE ; and Mr WADDEL says that it was absolutely incredible how accurately Mr SMELLIE corrected the proofs, while he, Mr WADDEL, read to him as fast as he was able.

EVEN when almost a boy, Mr SMELLIE had acquired, by early habit and careful application to study, a remarkable readiness and facility of writing upon any subject on which he chose to occupy his thoughts. This valuable faculty must assuredly have been much strengthened, by the practice of communicating his ideas on all subjects that occurred in the course of study to his youthful friends and companions, of which we have already given some examples in the still existing remnants of his early literary correspondence. Through the beneficial consequences of this habit, joined to a correct taste and excellent memory, he never, in his more advanced days, made a second copy of any of his literary efforts. What follows is a list of such of his early Essays as have come to our knowledge; but we have reason to believe that many others were committed to the flames, along with other curious papers, the destruction of which has been already mentioned with regret in the first volume of these *Memoirs*.

1. The first essay he ever wrote, was a Description of the Telescope and Microscope, read before the Newtonian Society in

August 1760, when he was twenty years of age.

2. A Discourse on Spontaneous Generation, in which he attempted to prove, by experiment, that no animal can possibly be produced without the intervention of male and female parents. Dated 21st February, 1761.
3. A Discourse on Vegetation, read to the same Society on the 2d of January 1762.
4. Experimental Observations on a female child, born on the 30th of January 1762.
5. An Essay on Poverty ; which was published by his son, along with his posthumous work, containing the lives of several eminent men.
6. An Essay on Motion.
7. The Man of the Moon, written in 1762 ; intended for a periodical work which had been projected in concert with one of his earliest friends, but which was never brought forwards. Of this two numbers only were composed, and both of them by Mr SMELLIE.
8. A Disquisition on the question, whether the Account of the Creation, as given by Moses, can be reconciled to the Newtonian System of Philosophy ? written in 1763.

9. A Dissertation on the means of promoting Public Spirit ; likewise published along with his posthumous lives of eminent men.
10. A Discourse on the Sympathetic Emotion of Virtue, and its cause, written in 1764.
11. An Essay on Taste.
12. A Discourse on Dreaming, written in 1764.
13. A Discourse on Charity ; written, delivered, and published, at the request of the Grand Lodge of Free Masons.
14. An Essay on the Immortality of the Soul.
15. A Disquisition on the question, whether, according to the Principles of Morality, those called Heathens can be saved ?
16. An Essay on the Custom of Shaking Hands.
17. On Generation.
18. Reflections on Memory, &c.
19. An Attempt towards a Theory of the Earth.
20. Evidence, from Human Nature, to Prove that the Original Intention of the Creator, with respect to Man, is not fulfilled in the Present State of things, as an Argument for a Future State of Existence.
21. Evidences of the Existence of a Final Cause.

22. An Essay Calculated for the Meridian of a Magazine.
23. The question considered, Whether the Goodness of Providence can be reconciled with the Miseries to which Man and other Animals are unavoidably exposed, without the Assistance of Revelation, and Abstracting from the Notion of a Future State ?
24. An Essay on the question, Whether are all Animate and Inanimate bodies made for the immediate use of Man ; or is that only a Secondary end of their existence ?—Published by his son in 1800, along with the lives of eminent men already mentioned.
25. Whether Oratory, upon the whole, has been of use to Mankind ?—Likewise published in the beforementioned posthumous volume.
26. An Essay on the Nature, Powers, and Privileges of Juries.

This Essay was published in 1784 ; and is an admirable argument on the nature, powers, and privileges of Juries, which ought to be carefully read, and held in perpetual remembrance, by every true friend to our

excellent constitution, and more especially by all who may have occasion to become Jurymen. It may be remarked that Mr SMELLIE, in this pamphlet, inculcated those doctrines, which have been since established as English law, by Mr FOXES celebrated bill on the subject of libels. This pamphlet has been frequently quoted, and much extolled, on many criminal trials both in England and Scotland. The present Lord ERSKINE, in his defence of the Dean of St Asaph for a libel, paid Mr SMELLIE a very high compliment for his admirable defence of the rights and powers of Juries.

IT is certainly proper and necessary that the laws should be absolute in every well regulated State, for securing the lives, property, and liberty of the subjects, and for preserving the peace, order, and well-being of Society. But the wisdom of our ancestors has happily provided several moderating checks upon their extreme severity, as applicable to individual cases. In the noble and enlightened exercise of the rights of Juries, there exists an excellent and gigantic power of controul against arbitrarily wresting the words of the law to the destruc-

tion of its spirit. The words of the verdict, Guilty or not Guilty, are by no means necessarily confined to the bare enunciation of whether the facts alleged in the indictment against the persons under trial, are, in the estimation of the Jurymen, true or false, proved or not proved by the evidence adduced on the trial; the tenor of the verdict enables the jury to consider and determine, whether the facts and the spirit of the law, combined together, imply that measure of guilt which merit the punishment indicated in the dead letter of the law, as it applies to the case in point. So long as jurymen preserve that inestimable privilege, they may bid defiance to any arbitrary judicial enemy of our boasted liberties.

ON this subject, dear and invaluable to Britons, the writer of these Memoirs has a conscious pride in reflecting that his father was a member of the jury on the trial of **CARNEGIE** of Finhaven, for the murder of Lord **STRATHMORE** in 1728; when, through the persuasive eloquence and constitutional legal knowledge of the late Lord President, **ROBERT DUNDAS** of Arniston, grandfather of the present worthy and much respected Lord Chief

Baron of the Scots Exchequer, the jury on that case reconquered the liberty of Scotland, by resuming a right to judge not only of the naked fact, but of the fact and the law conjunctively. In good old times, the words of the Scots verdicts were *Cleanyit* and *Fulyit*; exactly correspondent to the more modern phrase of *Guilty* and *Not Guilty*. Through the contrivances of the court lawyers of the latter Stewart princes, the Scots juries had been compelled or enveigled to surrender the laws, lives, and liberties of their countrymen, into the hands of an arbitrary and corrupt court, aiming to become despotic. During that arbitrary interval, the words of the verdict, in all criminal cases, had been altered to *proven* or *not proven*, by which the court had the power of condemning men to punishment at their pleasure.

MR DUNDAS was then a young and rising lawyer, and was employed as council to defend MR CARNEGIE against the imputation of murder, in consequence of Lord STRATHMORE having been accidentally slain by the sword of Mr CARNEGIE, which he had drawn in repression of insufferable insult from a third person. The court had pro-

nounced an interlocutor, or interim decree, finding the naked facts, as narrated in the indictment, *relevant to infer the pains of law*, or legally authorising the punishment of death, if proved by the evidence on the trial; and that acute advocate saw no chance of safety for his client, unless he could convince the jury of their right to resume the power of pronouncing on the law and the fact as inseparably conjoined. To this infinitely important point he chiefly directed the whole powers of his eloquence, and succeeded, happily for his client as an individual, gloriously for his country, and most honourably for himself. The resumption by that jury of the ancient legal language of the verdict, restored to Scotland the beneficent reign of the *spirit* of the law, in place of the discretionary power of the court and the crown lawyers, who pretended to rule under the authority of its dead letter.

BESIDES the before mentioned essays, Mr SMELLIE wrote and published the following political pamphlets. But he published many other pamphlets, both political and miscellaneous, of which we have no remaining memorials. He used to say that he had com-

posed and published so many *trash pamphlets* (his own words) that he could neither recollect their titles nor number. This circumstance will not be wondered at, as he never preserved in his possession a single copy of any book or pamphlet of his own writing.

1. Alarm to the inhabitants of Edinburgh, published 12th October 1774.
2. *Behold yon Pair!* A pamphlet connected with the politics of Sir LAURENCE DUNDAS in the management of the Town Council of Edinburgh.
3. Address to the Citizens of Edinburgh.
4. Letters to GILBERT LAURIE, Esq. Lord Provost of Edinburgh.
5. An Address to the Burgesses of Dunfermline, by a Weaver.

ALTHOUGH the temporary incidents of little burgh politics are not worthy of being recorded, the following story relative to this last pamphlet may be shortly noticed.

DURING a political ferment in the small town of Dunfermline, in Fife, a certain political deacon had prepared a pamphlet for cir-

culation, entitled, *Borough Politics Detected*. The opponents of the party to which the deacon belonged, had procured a copy of that pamphlet while printing, and solicited Mr SMELLIE to answer it ; and, accordingly, his address to the burgesses, under the signature of a Weaver, was distributed at the very same moment with the performance of the political deacon. From this circumstance, the deacon and his friends believed, or affected to believe, that nothing but the Devil or some of his satellites could have done this : as the greatest care had been taken, as they thought, to prevent any part of the Deacons pamphlet from being seen before publication. These circumstances produced the following curious hand-bill or advertisement from the indignant and astonished Deacon, which was anxiously circulated in Dunfermline, as an antidote against Mr SMELLIES Address. This Address to the citizens of Dunfermline by Mr SMELLIE is said to have occasioned a mob in that place, which did considerable mischief before it could be quelled.

“ I \*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\* leat Decon of the \*\*\*\*\* of Dunfermline, hereby intimates to all persons, That, without the advice or assistance of any person whatever, I devised & wrote

every sentence of a letter, titled Burrow Politicks detected, and also invented & wrote every word on the title paige.

“ My reason for writing & puteing up this Advertiesment, is That some first reat child of the Deivel, no doubt with a vew to serve his own, and the Deivels intrest, has publisht to my fellow Burgesses, & has most audaciously subscribed himself a Weaver.—I have not time to write & cause print a full answer to said address ; but I take this method to assure the publick, that it is made up of Leis and such stusse that Evedencess that the whole wisdom of Hell has been imployed in the diction, and as said some first reate servants of the Divel has been employed in writing it.

“ I ALARME the publick to be war of said address, & of the fatal scheme it means to support ; & I challenge the dastardly author, who has just reason to be ashamed to signe his name, to appear, and in fair reasoning I will answer him. 20th September 1774.

“ N. B. It will be understood that I did not dictate the letters and citations.”

ON the 5th December 1785, Mr SMELLIE read his Essay on Instinct in the Physical Class of the Edinburgh Royal Society, of which he was an original member ; but as it was intended for publication in his Philosophy of Natural History, in which it forms a distinguished article, he did not wish that it should appear at full length among the dissertations in the Edinburgh Philosophical Transactions. An Abstract of it, however, was printed in the History of the Royal Society, introductory to the first volume of their Transactions. It would occupy too much space in this work to give that abstract, or even any distinct connected abridgement of the doctrine contained in this Essay ; nor is this to be regretted, as the whole is to be found in his great work, *The Philosophy of Natural History*. It may, however, be very shortly remarked, that Mr SMELLIE principally endeavours to prove, that no real distinction exists between REASON and INSTINCT ; and that the superiority of MAN over other animals depends on the greater number of instincts with which he is endowed ; traces of every instinct which he possesses being discoverable in the brute creation, but no species whatever enjoying the whole, and

most animals being extremely limited in the number of instincts which they possess ; but their instincts are proportionally stronger, and more steady in their operation than those of man, and their actions more uniform.

In the year 1788, some gentlemen proposed to Mr SMELLIE the establishment of an additional Edinburgh Newspaper, prompted chiefly, it is believed, by the desire of having a newspaper conducted upon what are called constitutional Whig principles. Besides engaging to assist in writing for the newspaper, these gentlemen promised to promote and support the adventure with their countenance and interest, and to run all the risk of pecuniary loss, if the adventure should prove ultimately unsuccessful. But, on considering the estimates of its probable expence, they all shrunk from the responsibility ; and the intended newspaper was abandoned. The *Prospectus*, however, which was composed by Mr SMELLIE, is here inserted as one of his literary remains, and as shewing the facility of his talents on a fresh branch of literature.

*Edinburgh, September 1788.*

“ To be published on the 5th day of November next, a day sacred to the Commemoration of an event which rendered Great Britain free, powerful, and illustrious,

## THE SCOTTISH CHRONICLE.

“ This Newspaper will be regularly continued every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

“ WHEN a new periodical paper is offered to the world, it is the duty of the Authors or Editors to give some reasons for their pretensions to public favour. In the exposition of our plan, we shall not endeavour to diminish that degree of merit which the other Newspapers of this City possess. They are already established; and we are not without hopes of establishing another source of information.

“ The Editors of the Scottish Chronicle, a considerable time ago, were earnestly solicited to attempt this undertaking, by some of the first literary characters in Scotland.

But the many difficulties and dangers the Editors had to encounter naturally created hesitation and delay. At last, every scruple was removed, and every difficulty was solved. Within these few months, a great number of gentlemen who have a real attachment to every thing that may have a tendency to promote the improvement of the country, and the happiness and intelligence of its inhabitants, stepped forward, and not only engaged to support this paper with their money, but, what is of greater importance to the public, to procure information from every quarter of the globe, and to enrich it occasionally with their own lucubrations, as well as with those of their friends.

“ **O**NE great object of the Scottish Chronicle is to make us acquainted with our own country: No information can be more interesting than to mark those improvements in agriculture, in the arts, in manufactures, in fisheries, and in commerce, which are daily advancing with rapidity in Scotland. Neither are science and taste to be neglected. Every work of merit, whether it be a foreign or a domestic production, shall be either ana-

lysed, or some account of it shall be given, in the Scottish Chronicle.

“ It is almost unnecessary to remark, that particular attention will be given to Parliamentary proceedings and other national objects, to the state and movements of foreign powers, and to every incidental intelligence that can be procured from an extensive correspondence. No newspaper was ever commenced in Scotland which had so many promising advantages, or which gave such rational hopes of success.

“ ESSAYS, in prose or verse, advertisements, and orders for the Scottish Chronicle, will be received by C. ELLIOT, Parliament Square, and by W. SMELLIE, Anchor Close, Edinburgh; and by C. ELLIOT & T. KAY, opposite Somerset Place, Strand, London.”

In 1786 or 1787, and in conjunction with the late Mr LITTLE of Libberton, Mr SMELLIE composed a satirical Latin poem, entitled *Streetum Edinense*; the introduction and notes for which were entirely written by Mr SMELLIE, and there is every reason to believe that

the mock heroic poem was principally composed by him likewise. It was occasioned by a very important improvement of the High Street of Edinburgh then going on, by lowering a most inconvenient and even dangerous high-crowned ridge to an easy and convenient slope; by which likewise the communications from the Ancient Royalty to the New Town and the southern suburbs, over two lofty bridges, were greatly ameliorated. Yet some well meaning inhabitants keenly opposed this beneficial measure, which gave occasion to considerable disputes, to which the *Streetum Edinense* very humorously alludes. It is hardly necessary to say, that it is written in imitation of the language and humour of the *Polemo-Middinia* of the celebrated **DRUMMOND** of Hawthorndean. At the conclusion of this *jeu-d'esprit* a second Canto was promised, but no more ever appeared. The appended notes belong to the original publication.

## STREETUM EDINENSE,

## CARMEN MACARONICUM.

## ENGLISH PROÆMIUM.

THE first edition of this *Canticle* has had such a rapid currency that the vanity of the Author began to rise high. An ugly consideration, however, soon repressed the ardour of his feelings. He reflected, that, in this best of possible worlds, *success* is no test of *merit*\*; and that, as the first edition was not *sold*, but given *gratis*, the great demand for his work might have proceeded from an *idle curiosity* of the *rabble*, and not from the *approbation* of the *learned* and *candid*. To complete the experiment, therefore, and to ascertain the rank he shall hold in the republic of letters, he now publishes this second edition, with great *additions* and *improvements*, at the low price of *TWOPENCE*. Neither have the *possessors*, for they were not *purchasers*, of the first impression any reason to complain; because, instead of *paying twice* for the *same book*, they are to pay only *once* for *two books*†. Besides, in imitation of the Town-Council, Authors should support their *Printers*, as the Magistrates do their *Deacons*, by uniformly *sticking* the *FIRST BATCH*.

\* Vide BUCHANS Domestic Medicine, Beatties Immutability of Truth, BLAIRS Sermons, and similar ephemerides.

† Vide CULLEN'S First lines, 4th edit. published by C. ELLIOT.

## CANTO I.

*NYMPHAE* quae colitis *highissima* tecta Edinae,  
 Seu vos *Fountainwella* \* tenet, piscifera *Crossa* †,  
 Aut *closa FORTUNAE*, quae situm veterioris  
*Town-Guardae* spectat, meretrix qua saepe jacebat,  
 Et juvenes senesque *guid ale drinkare* solebant :  
 Linquite oientes cellas, *il cleddaque bedda*,  
 Ploratis *mecum PLAIN-STENS* *High-Streetaque* ampla ;  
*Streetum* quod pingue coeno, turdisque humectum,  
 Praebuit invidiam Anglis, gentique voraci !  
 Et vos externi *Students*, *baith English et Irish*,  
 Et quos America, et quos fert *West-India* tellus,  
 Qui, titubante via, *Lassas kissare boneas*  
 In *streeto* tentant, cum jam *nox* humida Coelo  
 Praecipitat, suadentque cadentia *lumina* ‡ somnos ?  
 Et vos *Porterii*, *Black guards*, *Chairmenque Cadaei*,  
 Audite, O *saucy fellows* ! audite, cavete,  
 Nocturna versata manu, versata diurna,  
 Dulcis *BETSY PLAYFAIR* § ! *storiam tellabimus* omnem.

\* *Fountainwella*, the Fountain-well Close, where the alterations on the street begin.

† *Piscifera Crossa*, alluding to the custom of permitting oysters, muscles, cockles, and salt fish, to be sold within a few yards of the Cross, which smell disagreeably at all times, but intolerably in the warm months. The alterations on the street end at the Cross.

‡ *Cadentia lumina*, the town lamps, which scarce afford as much light as setting stars.

§ *BETSY PLAYFAIR*, a muse much perused in this city, especially during the sitting of the General Assembly.

POMPOSUS HUNTER, *very stout, richissimus, unus Concilii fuerat, nunc, hac virtute, Provostus,* -  
*Et, no doubt merito, KINGS PRINTER lately creatus,*  
*Buckled cum BRUCIO Doctissimo Logiciano,*  
*Well kent per Syllabum, qui medley exhibit ingens,*  
*Sed half, ut said is, vorat DUNDASSIA vortex\**;  
*Proximus inde loco, JAMES DICKSON, seller o' guid boons,*  
*Red cheeked GORDON, jolly soul, brewers horseque conductor,*  
*SA. DERSON† ticket seller, quoque Bacchi venditor odd SHAW,*  
*EYRE, FERRY woolsackus, nosy BLAIR, et douce GALOVAEUS,*  
*M'DOWAL sagax! GLOAG cripple foot, CAMPBELL, et MIL-*  
*LER,*  
*HARI Crispin, KENNEDY, et fierce TOM HALEUS ipse,*  
*WILL. BRODIE shuffle-card, TIBBETS hat-band, strang AN-*  
*DRA WIL ON.*  
*Quibusdam aliis, quos versu dicere non est.*

*From Londin rediens HUNTER, callare Balaeos*  
*Concilio statuit; tunc illis incipit ipse:*  
*“ Londinum nuper raperet quum publica pursa,*  
*Streetia malta vidi, satis ampla, et juste pavita;*  
*Me piguit nostri High Street quod vulgo vocatum,*  
*Et Brugh'-down statui, ut sic monumenta manerent*  
*Imperii nostri bairnisque sequentibus aevis;*  
*Sed sine vobis nil firmum est, speakutice, quaeaso.”*  
*Huic lente assurgen respondit dainty JAMES GORDON:*  
*“ Et me jamdudum vexabant streetia nostra,*  
*Ut coaches et chaisi penderent semijacentes‡;*

\* *Vortex* is commonly a *male*, but here it is emphatically, though not poetically, *the amorphosed into a female*.

† SANDERSON, treasurer to the Musical Society.

‡ *semijacentes*. The old street was raised so high in the middle that carriages could scarcely stand with safety on either side.

Immo, quod *worsum* est, ALE-CARTS haud raro *coupanatur*.  
 Tunc ea demitti placuit :" sic *speecha* finivit.  
 Sedebat ; partes alii assensibus implent.  
 Cum subito ad *dooras* accessit HAIUS heros  
 Ardens, *cappit* SOMERVILLUS, et *mild* HARY GUTHRIE,  
 Et multi ignotae famae hunc *grimly* sequuntur.  
 Concilio stetit, et *Provostum* increpat ore :  
 " Tantane te *silleri* tenuit fiducia vestri,  
 Jam *streetum plain-stensque*, meo sine NUMINE, tentas  
 Aequare, ac tantas nunc audes tollere moles ?  
 Anne adeo ignotum tibi est, sociisque *Bailaeis*,  
 Quas rixas moveo, et quac *strammashia dustas* \* ?  
*Choicea* † oblitum reris ignobilis HARTAE‡,  
 Fulgentem *goldae chainam*, et splendida *gowna* ?  
 Ante ergo *curvi* linquam praexcepta CULENI,  
 PITTUM laudabo, et *cry up the Brunonian system* § ;  
 Immo confitear AITKENUM me potiorem,  
 Etsi perpetuo absurdula *booka* scribentem,  
 Quam *streeti* lapidem tangas, *plain-stensque* moveres ;"  
 Tunc irae impatiens, stopped short, " *Damn your bloodsque*,  
*cryavit*!"

CONFREMUERE omnes, *Provostus* voce manuque  
 Murmura compressit, tum *bravely* affatur et inquit :  
 " *Angraei* sperno HAIUS jactantia verba,  
 Nec illum *fiddlestick* facio, comitesque *fightantes* :  
 Anne *wonder* tibi est hoc *streeti* experimentum ?

\* *Strammashia dustas*, two cant words which signify quarrels and disturbances.

† *Choicea*, the choice.

‡ HARTAE, C—R H—T.

|| *Brunonian system*, some new discoveries made in physic by the celebrated Dr BROWN.

Quod *streightum* volumus, hoc primo *makere* curvum,  
 Quod *WESTUM* fieret, semper *beginnere* *EASTUM*,  
 Curamus; *thinking*, si unquam *jobba* deessent,  
 Quid facerent *BROWNUS*, aut *brickmaking* *JAMIESONUS*,  
 Et multi *Bailorum* *friendi*, *Deaconesque* sequaces:  
 Nam talibus *politics*, et defensoribus istis,  
 TEMPUS eget!"

Elatisque *hippis*, magno cum murmure FARTAM  
 Barytonam \* emisit, veluti *Mons Megga* cracasset;  
 Quod si *King Spaniac*, *CHARLAEUS* nomine, centum,  
 Hisce consimiles, habuisset forte *canones*,  
*Batteraret* Calpen †, Calpen *dungasset* in *assam*.  
 Effugit *HATEUS*, *feetibus* *fear* addidit alas,  
 Effugiunt comites, *very strongly* et foede *stinkantes*.

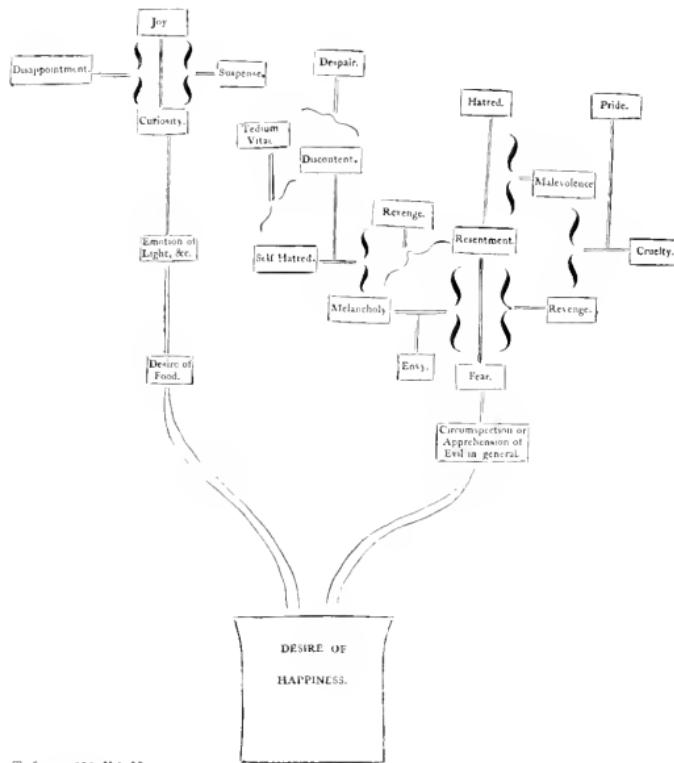
\* Barytonam, low, deep sounding.

† Calpen, Gibraltar.

N. B. Canto II. will appear with all convenient speed.



# TREE OF THE PASSIONS.



SEVERAL detached scraps of essays, and plans for the composition of essays, of Mr SMELLIES writing, still remain in manuscript, but mostly in so imperfect a state, or so mutilated, as to be scarcely intelligible. At one time the number of these, on various subjects, in his repositories, was very considerable; but, as has been frequently mentioned, most of them were destroyed by himself, along with many letters and other papers, a short while before his death. From those which yet remain, the following short specimens are selected, as instances of the playfulness of his fancy, while labouring under the pressure of the disease of which he died. The first is a ludicrous attempt to describe the numerous votaries to HYGEIA attending upon St BERNARDS Well, arranged into classes and genera, on a plan similar to the Linnaean System of Natural History; which is quite imperfect, and we know not whether it was ever extended any farther: The *second* is an attempt to delineate the rise and progress of the human passions, in the form of a genealogical tree: The *third* seems to have been intended for a Magazine or a Newspaper: And the *fourth* appears to have been a half serious half jocular attempt to give a classical explanation of

the motto to the badge of the knights baronets of Nova Scotia :

*Fav mentis honestae gloria.*

SANCTI BERNARDI CULTORES,

Secundum Linnaei Systema Sexuale, descripti.

Omnes hi Cultores in quinque classes facile dividi possunt.

*Nota.*—Omnes sunt Dioecii, *i. e.* Mas et Foemina in truncos separatos insidentes, aut vadentes.

Classis 1<sup>ma</sup>, Rubescentes.

2<sup>da</sup>, Viridescentes.

3<sup>ta</sup>, Sterilescentes.

4<sup>ta</sup>, Ardentes.

5<sup>que</sup>, Hirsutae.

Character Classis 1<sup>mae</sup>, Facies rubra, maculata, *turba*.

Genus 1. [*Cetera desunt.*]

*Observations by the Cobler of Cripplegate.*

“ IF, when a lady adjusts her tucker, a gentleman eagerly peers at the snow it co-

vers ; She is not his wife.—If, when busy playing with her fan, she looks at him with melting softness; She is not his wife.—When she drops her glove, if he stoops with eagerness, and, with complaisance, presents it to her ; She is not his wife.—When in conversation, if the gentleman enforces his arguments with a smile, and seems eager to persuade her ; Not married.—If you observe extreme attention on either side when the other speaks, you may safely pronounce ; Not married.—The complaisant turn of the hand, when it is given to help her into a coach, makes the presumption strong, that they are Not married.—If, in conversation, a word should slip out with a double meaning, she taps him gently on the shoulder, with a Fye ! Fye ! and chides him with a smile ; Not married.—If he eagerly catches every word she says, and finds wit where none was meant ; Not married.—Fearful of the morning dews, if he gently slips a cambric handkerchief about her neck, and expresses a more than common concern at the danger of her taking cold ; Not married.—If in company, industrious to conceal the foibles of each other ; then, to be sure, Not married.

*Critical Explanation of the Motto to the Badge  
of Nova Scotia.*

“ *Fax* signifies a torch, or flambeau ; likewise the sun or any star, an incendiary, marriage.—*Facem praeccludere*, to shew the way.—*Noctivagaeque faces coeli* ; *flammeaque volantes*. Lucret. lib. 5. v. 1190. The stars or meteors.—*Dum rosea face sol inferret lumina coelo*. Hence it may be used for a luminous body, and figuratively for vivacity or genius.—*Nocturnas faces coeli*. Lucret. lib. 2. v. 206.—*Nec nimis irai fax*. Lucret. lib. 3. v. 304.—*Facem addere*, to excite or blow the coal.—*Fax mentis honestae gloria*, may either mean glory is the chief motive, or exciter, of a generous mind : or, wisdom is the ornament, or glory, of a liberal heart : or, glory shews the way, or regulates the actions of a gentleman : *i. e.* glory is the motive of his actions. In the sense of marriage, it may refer to the integrity or brotherly affection of the order.”

MR SMELLIE was peculiarly useful to many authors in the correction of their works, one instance of which, in regard to the Family

Physician, or Domestic Medicine, has been already noticed ; but, on this subject, as a matter of honourable delicacy, it is proper and necessary to touch with a very light hand. Yet the following instance may be mentioned, without danger of injury or offence. Mr SMELLIE happened at one time to be absent from Edinburgh on an excursion to the Highlands, when a very respectable medical practitioner, who had more experience and knowledge than classical learning or profound science, sent a work in MS. to be printed at his press. By the time of Mr SMELLIE'S return, a considerable portion of the work was actually printed and thrown off. Fortunately for the literary and professional reputation of the author, Mr SMELLIE was induced to look over the work, which he found to be often expressed in extremely incorrect and confused language, and many even of the technical terms grossly ill spelt. Upon his suggestion, the author had the good sense to have the whole cancelled and reprinted under the inspection of Mr SMELLIE, who altered and amended the language throughout the whole work. Another work of great celebrity we know to have been entirely re-written by Mr SMELLIE.

ON this delicate subject, the following honourable testimony has been received since this work went to press, in a letter from Dr ANDREW DUNCAN, senior, who has long, with much ability and industry, filled the chair of the Institutes of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, and to whom the numerous labouring poor of that city owe a most valuable institution, the Public Dispensary, where they are supplied gratis with medical and surgical advice, and all requisite medicines, and where vaccination is extensively and gratuitously performed.

## No. CXLIV.

Dr ANDREW DUNCAN, *senior*, to Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE.

DEAR SIR,

*Edin. 1st Aug 1810.*

I AM very sorry that, from different circumstances, I cannot at present give you all the information I could wish respecting my acquaintance with your father, which subsisted with considerable intimacy and much satisfaction to both of us, for the term

of more than thirty years ; till it was terminated by his death, which I sincerely lamented.

My first acquaintance with him began in 1764, when I was a student of botany. At that time our worthy Professor, the late Dr HOPE, encouraged the most ingenious and able of his students to read essays to the class on botanical subjects. These were styled the Amenitates Academicæ ; and one of the first I heard was an Essay by your father on the Sexes of Plants. Although his sentiments on that subject were very different from mine, as well as from those of our excellent Professor, yet I admired the ingenuity of his reasoning very much ; and by means of our mutual friend, the Rev. Dr CHARTERS, now minister of Wilton, I was introduced to him. I found him on all occasions a sensible and agreeable companion.

WHEN I had occasion, in the year 1769, to publish my inaugural dissertation, *De Alvi purgantium natura et usu*, I employed him as my printer ; and I not only obtained, by his means, an accurate work, but several

important corrections in the language. Contrary, I believe, to the common practice, I read over with him every proof sheet, in his printing-house ; and, from his hints, I well remember that I improved the language in several particulars. Soon after, in 1770, I printed with him my Elements of Therapeutics, which received similar benefits from his corrections.

SOME years afterwards, I believe in the year 1776, I proposed your father as a member of the Philosophical Society, where I had often the satisfaction of receiving much instruction and entertainment from his papers and observations.

WHEN the Antiquarian Society was established in Edinburgh, of which he was one of the original members, I was proposed by him, and I believe was the first *admitted* member. There also I often met him with much satisfaction ; and from the first commencement of our acquaintance till the termination of his life, we lived in habits of intimacy and friendship. I remain, &c.

ANDREW DUNCAN, sen.

THE ensuing Proposals for publishing a *Flora Edinburgensis* by MALCOLM M'COIG, gardener to the Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh, was written by Mr SMELLIE, at the desire of the author; who, though an excellent gardener, and intimately versant in all the plants of the garden he had charge of, and a good memorial botanist, had not the advantage of a liberal education.

*Proposals for publishing*

F L O R A E D I N B U R G E N S I S,

OR

A Systematic Arrangement and Description of all the Plants, those of the Cryptogamia Class excepted, which grow wild within fourteen miles round Edinburgh.

*To which will be added,*

Complete Catalogues of the Plants which are found on each of the islands in the Firth of Forth.

Q 2

*By MALCOLM M'COIG,*

Gardener to the Royal Botanic Garden,  
Edinburgh.

*Plan of the Work.*

“AT the beginning of every class, the several Orders and Genera will be enumerated, together with the short characters which distinguish one genus from another, after the manner of Linnaeus.

“UNDER each Genus, the several species, with their trivial names and specific differences, will be comprehended. References will likewise be made to those authors who have given figures of the different species. To every species, the English name, its duration, time of flowering, its native soil, the particular places in which it is found, and a short English description will be subjoined.

*Conditions.*

“THE Work will be contained in one volume 8vo. price Five Shillings in boards.

to be paid on delivery of the Book. 2. It will be put to press as soon as a competent number of subscriptions are received."

IN the year 1790, Messrs BELL and BRADFUTE, respectable booksellers in Edinburgh, reprinted a very curious work in two volumes octavo, which seems to have been originally published in 1704, entitled **THE HISTORY OF MAN**, or the Wonders of Human Nature; to which Mr SMELLIE wrote the following Introduction, in which he gives an account of the nature and merits of the performance.

*A short Account of this Work.*

"IT is a humiliating circumstance in the history of mankind, that great genius and great learning, which are seldom combined in one person, should so often be overlooked, or recognised at a period only when the unfortunate author can neither enjoy the reputation nor the reward due to his merit. Besides multitudes of others, the names of **MILTON** and **BUTLER** will be a perpetual reproach to the age and nation in which they lived.

“ THE author of the following work, of whose name or history I can find no traces, has been a man of great erudition and research. He has collected and recorded, from both ancient and modern writers, a very considerable and a very valuable number of historical facts, of moral and religious reflections, of wise sayings, of excellent and entertaining anecdotes, of smart and amusing repartees. To these he often prefixes or subjoins judicious and pertinent remarks. His observations, on many of the passages he quotes, discover him to have been a man not only of uncommon industry, but of great judgment and taste.

“ IN this work, the author exhibits a distinct and unequivocal picture of the manner in which he had occupied his time, and directed his studies. He had travelled through almost all the paths of science and literature ; and he made his remarks, not with an undecerning eye and an apathetic indifference, but with acuteness of observation and sensibility of mind. He selected from most writers both in ancient and modern languages : and these selections have an uniform tendency to please the imagination, to inform

the understanding, and to mend the heart. The examples he produces of the most shocking vices, which have in all ages disgraced our species, and of the most amiable virtues, which have occasionally, though too rarely, adorned human nature, are numerous, striking, and instructive.

“ THE plan our intelligent and laborious author has adopted, instead of being showy, and calculated to attract general attention, is extremely simple, and suited to convey to his reader, in the most perspicuous and easy manner, and without a symptom of ostentation, the fruits of his industry and genius. The collections he has made are extremely various; and he has arranged them in the simple order of the ALPHABET. His work, of course, is a DICTIONARY of *sentimental* and *useful* knowledge. His researches have been so extensive, and the objects of his study so numerous, that a person can hardly think of a subject in any department of literature, but, by turning to any leading word, he will find much information. What influences the value of this Dictionary of historical and moral entertainment, the compiler of it uniformly quotes the authorities from which

the facts and observations he has selected are derived. By attending to these quotations from innumerable authors, many of whose writings are now not commonly perused, some idea may be formed of the nature and utility of the work under consideration.

“From this view of the book, it is apparent, that, though it has long been neglected, and its author known to few, it merits a general attention, and should lie on every family table, as a fruitful source of instruction and amusement.

\* \* \* It was first published at London in the year 1704; and a private gentleman, from a thorough conviction of its utility, now offers a second edition to the public.”

In the year 1792 or 1793, Mr SMELLIE was applied to by several gentlemen belonging to the Faculty of Advocates, to write an answer to the revolutionary works of THOMAS PAINE, which threatened at one time to have disorganized and overturned our excellent constitution, and to have plunged our happy isle into all the horrors of insurrection, anarchy, rapine, massacre, and military despotism,

which tormented and disgraced France for so many years, and has reduced that country and all the continent of Europe to political slavery. At that period Mr SMELLIE was so completely occupied in other works more suited to his taste and habits of study, that he found himself under the necessity of declining the task. But he used to say to his acquaintances, some of whom are still in life, “ that, if it had not been for his indispensable engagements, he flattered himself he could have given PAINE as sound a whipping as ever Dr GILBERT STUART gave to any poor devil of an author in the Edinburgh Magazine and Review.” Mr SMELLIE certainly possessed a very strong talent for controversial writing, which he sometimes indulged in his political pamphlets, mostly now forgotten ; but of which one example will be found in these Memoirs, in his expostulatory address to the Rev. Mr CHARLES NISBET. After Mr SMELLIE had declined this political task, it is said to have been undertaken by the late learned and highly respectable Dr HARDIE, Professor of Church History, and one of the Ministers of Edinburgh, who published a very well written pamphlet called the *Patriot*.

MR SMELLIE was often in the Advocates Library, one of the most magnificent and extensive collection of Books and Manuscripts in Europe. He was printer to the Faculty of Advocates, as formerly mentioned ; and, in the course of his studies, had frequent occasion to procure books from their inestimable collection, which is accessible to all men of letters resident in Edinburgh, with a degree of liberality which does the Faculty and its members the greatest honour. Respecting this library, the following notice was written by Mr SMELLIE.

“ WHEN the Library of the Edinburgh Faculty of Advocates falls to be mentioned, it would be unpardonable to omit a truth of which every man of letters in Edinburgh has daily experience. The collection, especially of printed books, greatly exceeds that of any library in Britain ; and free access to the perusal of them is cheerfully and politely allowed. On this subject we shall go farther. The occasional use of books in a public library is a most valuable privilege. The Faculty of Advocates, however, not only grants this privilege, but any member of the Faculty, by his signature, may oblige

his friend with such books as he chuses to have out of the library for a reasonable time ; and such requests, on all proper occasions, are most liberally granted. The Faculty does more. Literary gentlemen, not members, by giving bond for a certain sum, often acquire the privilege of taking out books on giving their own receipts. To this noble collection, joined to the generosity of its proprietors, Scotland, for these hundred years past, has been much indebted for the many productions of genius and learning, which have enabled her sons, within that period, to make such a distinguished figure in almost every department of science."

To this just and well-merited panegyric, it may be added, that this vast and valuable collection has been long kept in a series of large and lofty rooms under the Parliament House, or law courts of Edinburgh ; which, though very well adapted for the purpose, have a most unfortunately mean and dark entry, and have now become much too confined for the immense and fast growing literary treasures which they contain. As a portion of the splendid additions which are now making to the Scots law courts at Edin-

burgh, the Advocates are building a magnificent and extensive room for the farther and more appropriate accommodation of their library.

As in some measure connected with the foregoing subject, the literature of Edinburgh, Mr SMELLIE used to relate the following anecdote: Mr Amyat, the Kings chemist, a very sensible and agreeable English gentleman, who resided some time at Edinburgh, once observed to Mr SMELLIE, that Edinburgh enjoyed a noble privilege not possessed by any other city in Europe. On being asked his meaning, he said, “Here stand I at what is called the *Cross of Edinburgh*, and can in a few minutes take fifty men of genius and learning by the hand.” The fact is well known; but, to a native of that city, who has been all his days familiarized with it, and who has not travelled into other countries, that circumstance, though certainly remarkable, passes unnoticed. Upon strangers, however, it makes a deep impression. In London, Paris, and all other great cities of Europe, though they contain many literary men, the access to them is difficult; and even after that is obtained, the conversation,

for some time, is shy and constrained. In Edinburgh, the access to men of parts is not only easy, but their conversation and the communication of their knowledge are at once imparted to intelligent strangers with the utmost liberality. The philosophers of Scotland have no nostrums. They tell what they know, and deliver their sentiments without disguise or reserve."

THE above observations, which proceeded from the pen of Mr SMELLIE, require some notice. The fact, as stated, *was* formerly strictly true. Edinburgh, at that time, confined almost exclusively to the old city, used to see almost a daily concourse of all her respectable inhabitants at the cross, a central part of the principal street, between the hours of one and three. This served two purposes; they met to discuss the topics of the day, and to see their acquaintances, without the labour and waste of forenoon calls. They were further led to this habit, because all the coffee houses and booksellers shops, the usual lounges of literary idle hours, were then around the cross. Matters have considerably changed by the great extension of Edinburgh both to the south and north.

Coffee houses and booksellers shops are now dispersed in many places ; and literary men are not now to be found at the cross in change hours, as formerly.

WITHOUT arrogating any superior liberality to Edinburgh literary men, their habits of ready communication may be thus accounted for. Many of them are professors in the University, and accustomed to be much interrogated by their students on scientific subjects ; and, consequently, not only they, but those who have been used to the beneficial effects of this unreservedness of information as students, and accustomed to the free information of the professors, either as such, or in company with them, have acquired that pleasing habit of urbanity in philosophy and literature. Men who have acquired all their knowledge by solitary study, are more apt to be niggardly of their hidden treasures, and to conceive more highly of the importance of their individual acquisitions.

AMONG many who applied to Mr SMELLIE for his assistance and advice on literary subjects, or projected works, was the late worthy Mr JOHN EDGAR, writer to the signet, who

possessed some poetical taste, or at least had a strong propensity for rhyming, and had proceeded far in the strange project of rendering the History of England into verse. But Mr SMELLIE so harassed and teased him on the singularity of the subject on which he had chosen to employ his muse, that he at length relinquished the proposed work. Mr EDGAR and Mr SMELLIE happened one day to have a *tête à tête* dinner in Douglases tavern, where the club called the Crochallan Fencibles used to meet; and Mr Edgar, as he told the story himself, considered himself for a long time as contributing materially to Mr SMELLIES amusement and information; when, all at once, to his vast disappointment and chagreen, Mr SMELLIE addressed him nearly as follows: “ Dear JOUN, let us go and see if the mistress has any tea; for, to tell you the truth, I am most sincerely tired of you and your stories.” Mr EDGAR had, however, the good sense to accompany Mr SMELLIE to the tea-table of the landlady, and the good temper to continue his intimacy with Mr SMELLIE unabated.

Mr SMELLIE was a member of the Crochallan Fencibles, a convivial club which used

to meet in a tavern in Edinburgh, and which consisted of a considerable number of literary gentlemen. The club assumed the name of *Crochallans*, from the burden of a Gaelic song with which the landlord used sometimes to entertain the members, who chose to name their association *Fencibles*, because several military volunteer corps in Edinburgh then bore that appellation. In this club, most of the members bore some pretended military rank or title, as colonel, major, captain, &c. Mr SMELLIE was recorder, and kept a regular journal of their proceedings, in which all new members, the elevation of any of the members to the fancied dignities of the club, all bets which took place during the meetings, and all fines or punishments for imaginary delinquencies, were regularly recorded in an ironical style of assumed consequence and decorum. He was besides invested in the dignified office of *hangman* to the corps, in the exercise of which it was his duty to execute rigid ironical justice upon all delinquents, which he is said to have performed with much humorous gravity. On the introduction of new members into this club, it was customary to treat them at first with much apparent rudeness.

as a species of initiation, or trial of their tempers and humour; and they usually got a friendly hint on this subject, that they might be aware of what was probably to happen. Mr SMELLIE was frequently appointed to drill the recruits in this way; and a few instances of his humorous manner on such occasions have been communicated. These certainly have an appearance of abrupt rudeness, which by no means belonged to the character of Mr SMELLIE; but every thing of this kind must be judged of from a comparison of circumstances and situation; and these anomalies were occasioned by the peculiarities of the social meeting at which they occurred. Were we enabled to combine them with the other incidents out of which they arose, but of which we have in vain sought for information, their connexion would be better understood, and their asperity less perceptible: for Mr SMELLIE never willingly or unnecessarily offended any one.

ONE day, a Baronet of very large landed property was introduced, who was likewise supposed to possess a tolerably high estimation of his own importance. Soon after he was seated at the festive board, Mr SMELLIE

addressed him in the following strain: "I am told, Sir THOMAS, that you have an estate of eight or ten thousand a-year."—"I dare say it may be thereabout," replied the Baronet. "After all," observed Mr SMELLIE, "I hope you will readily allow that you may possibly be a great blockhead notwithstanding all your wealth." The rich man was at first confounded at the strangeness of this blunt address; but recollecting himself of the hints he had received, he joined heartily in the ironical spirit of the company, and declared afterwards that he had never passed a more entertaining evening in the course of his life.

ON another occasion a highland Chief was introduced to the convivial corps, and happened to take his seat next Mr SMELLIE; who, after some preliminary conversation, asked permission to take hold of the gentleman's proboscis, which happened to possess considerable prominence; on which, turning to the Colonel or Preses, he desired the whole corps to bear witness that he had taken a highland Chieftain by the nose, who did not dare to resent the affront.

ON the first introduction of a gentleman of peculiarly polite manners, who happened

to sit at table directly opposite a dish of salmon, he addressed Mr SMELLIE with ceremonious politeness, “ Pray, Sir, would you chuse to eat a bit of salmon ?” Mr SMELLIE immediately answered, as if much offended by his question, “ What is it to you, Sir, whether I choose to eat salmon or not ?”

To the Crochallan club Mr SMELLIE introduced the celebrated Scots poet Burns in 1787, when in Edinburgh on occasion of publishing his poems. When the members of that club got BURNS and SMELLIE together at their jovial meetings, they always endeavoured to pit them against each other in a contest of wit and irony. On these occasions, according to the information of one of the members, Mr SMELLIE used to “ thrash the poet most abominably,” which gave occasion to the expression in a poetical effusion by BURNS, respecting Mr SMELLIE, to be afterwards inserted, “ *His caustic wit was biting rude.*” At this club the puns and bon-mots of Mr SMELLIE were innumerable, and used to keep the company often in a roar of laughter ; but none of these have been preserved, or at least have reached our knowledge.

THE following *jeu de mots* may be mentioned, but will require some explanation of local circumstance and Scots dialect. Having gone with some English gentlemen to shew them the Advocates Library, which is situate immediately underneath the Outer Parliament House, in which the lawyers and writers walk about in great numbers during term time, the strangers enquired of Mr SMELLIE the meaning of the great noise which they heard over head. His answer was, “ It is the Bougars of the outer-house cracking their *jeests*.” Bougars is an ordinary gross term, having the same meaning with fellows; and likewise signifies a beam of wood; and *jeests* equivocally signifies both jests and joists.

THE following was noticed many years ago in the Courier, a London newspaper. Returning one day on foot from Leith races, Mr SMELLIE was overtaken by a friend mounted on a *bit of blood*, who gaily asked him “ What he would stake against *time*? ” Mr SMELLIE dryly answered, “ I will stake *eternity*.”

THE late Mr ALEXANDER FORBES writer in Edinburgh, who had reduced himself almost

to beggary by thoughtless extravagance, and consequent entire neglect of business, spent his last shilling in purchasing a quarter of a lottery ticket, which came up a prize of L.25,000, by which he was restored to affluence. He was ever afterwards known among his acquaintances by the sobriquet of *lucky FORBES*. This word *lucky*, in the dialect of Scotland, has two very different significations ; besides the ordinary English meaning, *fortunate*, it is likewise used to denote a grand-mother, or an old woman. While one day in a tavern with Mr SMELLIE and a few other acquaintances, FORBES told the company that he had gone that morning to Leith with an intention to drown himself, but the water looked so confoundedly cold, that he could not pluck up sufficient resolution to effect his purpose. Mr SMELLIE attacked him on this strange intention of deliberate suicide, in a strain of biting ridicule, till at length FORBES exclaimed : “ I wish to God, SMELLIE, you would put your tongue to a dancing-school to learn it manners.” This unexpected sally, from a man remarkable for dullness, produced much mirth among the company.

ON the death of the celebrated DAVID HUME, his nephew, the present Professor of

Scots Law, erected a conspicuous monument to his memory in the Calton hill burying-ground, and in full view of the passengers on the north bridge of Edinburgh. This tomb is built in a massy and unadorned style, with the simple inscription of *David Hume, Esq.* After the tomb was nearly finished, Mr SMELLIE was walking one summer day on the Calton Hill, in company with the late well known Dr GILBERT STUART, and Dr JOHN BROWN, author of the once famous *Brownonian* system of medicine. Dr BROWN, who was a man of rough and coarse manners, observed to a mason, who was hewing a pavement stone for some finishing part of the tomb, “Friend, this is a strong and massy building; but how do you think the honest gentleman will get out at the resurrection?” The mason archly replied, “I have secured that point, Sir, for I have put the key under the door.”

ONE day Mr SMELLIE was standing near the cross engaged in conversation with the late Sir JOHN DALRYMPLE of Cousland, when a person intruded into their company, and addressed Mr SMELLIE with much rudeness and petulance. Sir JOHN observed that he wondered how Mr SMELLIE could submit to such impertinence. On which, Mr SMELLIE,

without speaking a word, shook his head gravely, and pointed significantly to his own forehead; to which intelligible hint, Sir JOHN gravely answered, “ Alas ! poor man.”

IN 1790, MR SMELLIE published the *first* volume of his great work, *The Philosophy of Natural History*, in quarto. For a considerable time previous to the publication, subscription papers had been extensively circulated by his friends, along with a *Prospectus* of the intended work, and a most respectable list of subscribers was procured. In this stage of the business, MR SMELLIE used his endeavours to dispose of the copy-right of the volume; and, after some negociation, concluded a bargain with the late MR CHARLES ELLIOT, an eminent bookseller in Edinburgh; whose letter, acceding to the terms which had been arranged between them, we have thought proper to preserve.

#### No. CXLV.

MR CHARLES ELLIOT to MR WILLIAM SMELLIE.

SIR, *Edinburgh, 11th Dec. 1786.*

I HAVE received yours of this date offering me the property of your book, entitled

The Philosophy of Natural History, lately offered to the public by subscription. The volume is to contain at least six hundred pages on an *English* type. The conditions, 1. That I pay you one thousand guineas, at six, twelve, and eighteen months, in equal proportions, after the book is printed off. 2. Besides the above sum of one thousand guineas, I am to allow you fifty pounds *sterling* for every edition of one thousand copies in quarto after the first edition ; and so on in proportion for every larger or smaller impression ; and, if reduced to an octavo form, that I shall pay you for every edition a sum proportioned to the respective selling price of the books in quarto and octavo. 3. That you shall have the refusal of printing every edition of the above work, according to the time that may be necessary for the publication of any particular edition.

I HEREBY accept of the above offer and conditions, and bind and oblige myself accordingly ; and am, &c.

CHARLES ELLIOT.

THIS excellent and luminous work consists of a considerable number of dissertations

on interesting subjects, in the extensive and almost inexhaustible science of Natural History ; some of which had been previously prepared as portions of his intended course of Lectures on that subject, which have been already mentioned in these Memoirs, and others were written expressly for the present occasion. Of the origin of this work Mr SMELLIE gives the following account in his Preface ; yet it may be observed, that, from some letters on this subject, already inserted, the original idea certainly appears to have been a *Course of Lectures* on the subject ; and, on finding a considerable opposition to that plan, it had been altered to a direct publication.

“ ABOUT fifteen years ago, in a conversation with the late worthy, respectable, and ingenious Lord KAMES, upon the too general neglect of natural knowledge, his Lordship suggested the idea of composing a book on the PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL HISTORY. In a work of this kind, he proposed that the productions of nature, which to us are almost infinite, should, instead of being treated individually, be arranged under general heads ; that, in each of these divisions, the known facts as well as reasonings should be collect-

ed and methodised in the form of regular discourses ; that as few technical terms as possible should be employed ; and that all the useful and amusing views arising from the different subjects should be exhibited in such a manner, as to convey both pleasure and information. The idea struck me. I have been occasionally employed since that period in collecting and digesting materials from the most authentic sources. These materials I have interspersed with such observations, reflections, and reasonings, as occurred to me from considering the multifarious subjects of which I have ventured to treat. \*\*\*\*\*

“ I now, with much diffidence, submit my labours to public opinion. An examination of the *Contents*, however, will convey a more clear idea of the nature of the work than a multiplicity of words. But I thought it proper to prefix a short account of the circumstances and motives which induced me to engage in an undertaking so extensive and so difficult to perform with tolerable success.”

THIS work alone would have amply sufficed to establish the fame of Mr SMELLIE as a

man of learning and talents, if his name had never been conjoined with any other literary enterprize. A second volume was left by him in manuscript, which was published by his son in 1799. Although published separately, and at an interval of nine years, it has been thought proper to conjoin the account of the two volumes of this book together as one whole. It would far exceed the due bounds to which these Memoirs are necessarily limited, to enter into an extended critical analysis of this interesting and instructive work, the best of the kind which has yet appeared; all, therefore, that we propose to attempt in this place is, to give a short general view of the plan, nature, and execution of the work. After which we shall close this portion of the work with a selection from the letters which still remain in Mr SMELLIES repositories on the subject.

THE first volume of the Philosophy of Natural History, which was published by Mr SMELLIE in 1790, is divided into *twenty-two* chapters, consisting of a series of essays on various topics in the general economy of animal bodies chiefly, excepting one chapter, which is devoted to a critical examina-

tion of the hypothesis in which vegetables have been supposed to propagate their kind by means of sexual influence. The *second* volume, consisting of *nine* chapters, continues the series on similar topics, except that the first chapter of that volume, which, in rigid propriety, ought perhaps to have stood at the commencement of the whole work, contains an excellent exposition of the utility of method or arrangement in treating the prodigiously extensive science of Natural History, and gives a luminous and excellent historical and characteristic account of the writings and arrangements of the principal ancient and modern naturalists, from ARISTOTLE, the father of Natural History, down to PENNANT, the last British systematical writer on this subject.

VOL. I. Chap. 1. is an essay on the distinguishing characters of Animals, Plants, and Minerals, or, as they are usually called, the *Three kingdoms of nature*. Mr SMELLIE is dissatisfied with the ordinary definitions or distinctions which have been assigned by naturalists, as characteristic of these three divisions of the works of creation:—" Stones grow ; vegetables grow and *live* ; animals

grow, live, and *feel*." This account of the matter by LINNAEUS, Mr SMELLIE considers as mere words, of which the meanings are perverted. Growth implies nutrition and expansion by means of organs; whereas stones or minerals are only augmented by the accretion of new matter, by aggregation, or by crystallization, which is not growth. Instead of proving, LINNAEUS only takes the life of vegetables for granted; and his definition of animals seems confined to an oyster or a polypus, the very lowest of animal beings. Mr SMELLIE considers definitions, thus applied to natural objects, as necessarily vague and unsatisfactory; and, because we are ignorant of the principles of animal life, or the essence of vegetable existence, that such attempts must ever be elusive and vain. Some qualities, however, in his opinion, which are common to animals and vegetables, may be traced; and from a due consideration of which, the limits between these two modes of existence may be in some degree traced and ascertained, yet not with perfect precision and accuracy.

" **SENSATION**, motion, and structure of parts, give animals a more extensive range in

their connexion with external objects. A certain portion of intellect, joined to the vital principle, seem to be the most distinguishing properties of animals, and to constitute their essence or being. Animals will, determine, act, and have a communication with distant objects, by their senses. They have the laws of nature in some measure at command. They protect themselves from injury by employing force, swiftness, address, and cunning. But vegetables remain fixed in the same place, and are subject to every thing that moves. Animals eat at intervals; their food requires time for digestion, and to answer the complicated purposes of secretion and nutrition. The structure of plants is more simple: they receive perpetual nourishment without injury. Animals search for and select particular kinds of food; but plants must receive whatever is brought to them by the different elements. Animals exist on the surface and in the interior parts of the earth, in the air, in water, in the bodies of men and other animals, in the internal parts of plants, and even in stones. But, if we except a few aquatics, plants are fixed to the earth by roots."

IN prosecuting this subject, Mr SMELLIE shows that several circumstances which have been alleged as characteristic of animals are either not universally so, or that in some of them vegetables participate. The heart has been affirmed to belong universally to animals; but caterpillars, and many insects and worms have no such organs. The loco-motive faculty, another peculiar characteristic of animals, is liable to much suspicion; for oysters, sea-nettles, gall-insects, polypi, and a variety of other animals, can hardly be said to enjoy this power. Besides, many kinds of motion are discoverable in vegetables. Their roots change their directions to avoid obstructions, and in search of food: their branches and leaves bend towards the light. The sensitive plant, the *hedysarum movens*, the *dionea muscipula*, afford various instances of motions that appear voluntary. The sleep of plants is another instance of vegetable motion. The stomach and brain have been considered as essential characteristics of animals; but the polypus has no stomach, or rather, its whole body, like that of a vegetable, may be considered as stomach; and it, and many other insects or worms have no brain. The difference, therefore, between animals and

vegetables seems rather to be in degrees of qualities or attributes, than in any thing essentially determinable.

“ BUT all animals are endowed with sensation, or at least with irritability, which has been considered as a distinctive character of animal life. If we see a being, whose structure exhibits nothing analogous to our organs of sensation, contracting rapidly when touched, directing its body uniformly to the light, seizing small insects by means of *tentacula*, or a kind of arms, and conveying them into an aperture at its anterior extremity, we hesitate not to pronounce that it is animated. Cut off its arms, deprive it of the faculty of expanding and contracting its body, the nature of this being will not be changed; but we will be unable to determine whether it possesses any portion of life. This is nearly the condition of the small sections of a polypus before their heads begin to grow. These and similar facts show that we are entirely ignorant of the essence and properties of life.”

IN the investigation of this curious subject, MR SMELLIE distinguishes between *sensation*, properly so called, and an inferior degree of

it, termed *irritability*, by means of which the muscular fibres of animals, even when detached from the body, contract upon the application of certain stimuli; and which quality appears to have no dependence upon consciousness. This irritability is less or more possessed by all plants; and upon it their various motions, before alluded to, seem to depend: In so far they approach nearly to the nature of animals; and the distinction between them and the least sentient animals is in consequence difficultly assignable, if at all. On the other hand, the distinction between vegetables and minerals is quite obvious and distinct; as in the mineral kingdom the parts of different bodies are not organized, but only arranged, and there is not the smallest analogy between the most regularly arranged or most perfectly configured minerals, and the most imperfectly organized animals or vegetables.

AFTER thus showing the extreme difficulty of fixing distinct boundaries between the animal and vegetable kingdoms, Mr SMELLIE proceeds to enumerate a considerable number of the beautiful analogies or resemblances which subsist between animals and vegetables,

which he arranges under three distinct heads ; 1. Structure and Organs ; 2. Growth and Nourishment ; 3. Dissemination and Decay. But we should exceed all due bounds were we to attempt any regular analysis of these curious and interesting topics, which are brought forward by MR SMELLIE on a very luminous arrangement, and are treated by him in a most pleasing and instructive manner. This excellent chapter is summed up and concluded in the following manner.

“ THE life of animals is diversified by a number of successive changes. Infancy, youth, manhood, old age, are characterised by imbecility, beauty, fertility, dotage. All these vicissitudes are conspicuous in the vegetable world. Weak and tender in infancy ; beautiful and vigorous in youth ; robust and fruitful in manhood ; and, when old age approaches, the head droops, the springs of life dry up, and the tottering vegetable, like the animal, returns to that dust from which it sprung. Upon the whole, by taking a retrospective view of the extreme difficulty of ascertaining the boundaries which distinguish the animal from the vegetable, and of the similarities in their structure and organs, in-

their growth and nourishment, in their dissemination and decay, it is apparent, that both these kingdoms constitute the same order of beings, and that Nature, in the formation of them, has operated upon one great and common model."

In continuing our account of this extensive, instructive, and amusing series of investigations into a great number of the most curious topics in the Philosophy of Natural History, we can only take a rapid view of the several subjects, and must refer our readers to the work itself, which has now been long in possession of the public. Chap. II. gives a view of the organs and general structure of Animals, beginning with the structure of Man, considered as the most perfect animal, and proceeding downwards by regular gradation through the comparative structure of Quadrupeds, Birds, Fishes, Insects, and Worms. Chap. III. Contains a view of the Respiration of Animals, and of the uses of Air in the economy of all animated beings. Here, undoubtedly, there is a circumstance of considerable importance wanting in the physiological account which Mr SMELLIE has given of respiration; as the beautiful illustration of that subject, in which the

production of animal heat by the combustion of carbon derived from the blood, and oxygen from the atmospherical air, which takes place within the lungs, had not been promulgated when Mr SMELLIE composed and published his work. The phlogistic theory in chemistry was then universally received among the learned, and Mr SMELLIE has explained in this chapter the uses of respiration in the animal economy in the most distinct manner, by which it could be then illustrated, according to the best chemical hypothesis then known.

IN Chap. IV. Mr SMELLIE considers the Motions of Animals, which he pursues through all the gradations, from the most perfect to the least organized insects and worms. Chap. V. is devoted to the consideration of instincts, in which, as formerly mentioned, Mr SMELLIE refers the boasted superiority of Man, usually denominated Reason, to the great number of instincts with which he is endowed; while traces of every instinct he possesses are discoverable in the brute creation, yet no particular species enjoys the whole, most animals being limited to a small number. It is in this treatise that the origi-

ginality and independence of Mr SMELLIES genius most conspicuously appears ; and we regret, therefore, that our limits do not admit of giving an analysis or abstract of this chapter ; which, indeed, is so close in its reasoning and language as hardly to admit of being condensed, being itself in a great measure an abstract or abridgement of his sentiments on the subject, yet expressed in the clearest and most intelligible manner. This very circumstance of clear, condensed, and excellently arranged enunciation of his doctrines, was the point in which Mr SMELLIE perhaps excelled, at least equalled all his contemporaries ; for he must be dull indeed who rises from any of the disquisitions of Mr SMELLIE, without fully comprehending his facts, doctrines, and reasonings ; and the work we are now considering may be offered as a model of composition to students in philosophy and physical knowledge. The doctrine contained in this chapter is thus summed up by its author.

“ FROM the above facts and reasonings, it seems to be apparent, that *instincts* are original qualities of *mind* ; that every animal is possessed of some of these qualities ; that the

intelligence and resources of animals are proportioned to the number of instincts with which their minds are endowed ; that all animals are, in some measure, rational beings ; and that the dignity and superiority of the human intellect are necessary results, not of the conformation of our bodies, but of the great variety of instincts which Nature has been pleased to confer on the species."

CHAPTER VI. treats of the senses of Smelling, Tasting, Hearing, Touch, Seeing, which are inquired into as possessed by the various classes of Animals : And to this chapter, Mr SMEILLIE has appended an abstract of the ingenious doctrines of the Abbé Condillac on Sensations. Chap. VII. gives a view of the Infancy of Animals. Chap. VIII. treats of Food. Chap. IX. of the Sexes of Animals. To this chapter a second section is appended, containing an Essay on the Sexes of Plants, of which we shall give a short account hereafter, in connexion with a controversy which this chapter produced with Dr ROTHERAM. Chap. X. treats of Puberty in different animals, with its symptoms and effects. Chap. XI. Of Love, the sexual intercourse, and parental affection. Chap. XII. Of the Trans-

formations which various animals undergo. Chap. XIII. Of the various habitations of different animals, as accommodated to their several exigencies. Chap. XIV. Of the Hostilities of the several kinds of Animals, and the advantages derived from this seemingly destructive institution of Nature. Chap. XV. Of the artifices employed by animals in catching their prey, and in escaping their enemies. Chap. XVI. Of the Association of Animals. Chap. XVII. Of the Docility of Animals, their improvement by culture or education, and the effects produced by domestication. Chap. XVIII. Of the Character and Disposition of Animals. Chap. XIX. Of the principle of Imitation in Animals. Chap. XX. Of the Migrations of various Animals. Chap. XXI. Of the Longevity and Death of Animals. Chap. XXII. Of the Progressive scale of Animals, rising through many gradations from those most imperfectly organized to Man, the chief and capital link in the chain of being on this earth; who, “capable of contemplating the works of Nature, may even rise to some faint ideas of her great Author.” Mr SMELLIE concludes this last chapter of his

first volume, with the following judicious, philosophical, and pious sentiments.

“ THE whole universe is linked together by a gradual and almost imperceptible chain of existences, both animated and inanimated. Were there no other argument in favour of the **UNITY OF DEITY**, this uniformity of design, this gradual concatenation of beings, which appears not only in this chapter, but from many other parts of the book, seems to be perfectly irrefragable. In contemplating Man, as the head of those animals with which we are acquainted, a thought occurred, That no sentient being, whose mental powers were greatly superior, could possibly live and be happy in this world. If such a being really existed, his misery would be extreme. With senses more delicate and refined ; with perceptions more acute and penetrating ; with a taste so exquisite, that the objects around him could by no means gratify it ; obliged to feed on nourishment too gross for his frame ; he must be born only to be miserable, and the continuation of his existence would be utterly impossible. Even in our present condition, the sameness and insipidity of objects and pursuits, the futility of pleasure, and the

infinite sources of excruciating pain, are supported with great difficulty by cultivated and refined minds. Increase our sensibilities, continue the same objects and situation, and no man could bear to live.—Let Man, therefore, be contented. His station in the universal scale of Nature is fixed by Wisdom. Let him contemplate and admire the works of his CREATOR ; let him fill up his rank with dignity, and consider every evil as a cause or an effect of general good.—This is the whole duty of Man.”

IT has been already noticed that the *second* volume of the Philosophy of Natural History was published in 1799, four years after the death of its ingenious author. Yet, though posthumous, it will distinctly appear, by various letters in the sequel, that the manuscript was all written and ready for the press in the year 1793, two years before Mr SMELLIE died ; and even the Preface to this volume was left ready for publication. In this volume, Mr SMELLIE extends the series of discussions on interesting subjects connected with the Physiology of Animals and Vegetables. This volume is only divided into *nine* chapters ; but most of these are sub-

divided into several sections, for the more luminous and orderly illustration of the different subjects, a first rate quality in writing, in which Mr SMELLIE had few equals, and certainly no superiors. Of this volume we propose to take a rapid glance, sufficient merely to give our readers a very general view of its contents, and must refer them to the work itself, with a confident assurance that it will amply reward them for its perusal, by much pleasing instruction, conveyed under a clear arrangement, and in excellent appropriate language.

In Chap. I. the author gives a concise view of the utility of Method, or Arrangement in every department of science; and points out methodical arrangement into tribes and families, or what are usually called Orders and Genera, as being evidently founded in Nature, both in the Animal and Vegetable kingdoms. To this he has appended a concise historical and characteristic account of the writings and arrangements of the principal ancient and modern Naturalists; beginning with ARISTOTLE, and ending with PENNANT. In Chap. II. The Multiplication and Continuation of the Species is consider-

ed, and the Theories of various authors, both ancient and modern, are explained and commented upon. Chap. II. treats of Mules, or the anomalous productions of Nature ; in the course of which, he shews that the mule produced between the horse and female ass is not entirely unprolific. As a second section to this chapter, Mr SMELLIE has given an exposition of a project for producing *silk* in Britain, by endeavouring to effect a commixture between some indigenous species of butterflies, whose caterpillars spin a substance exceedingly analogous with silk, with the moth or fly of the true silk-worm ; which he imagined might “ produce worms tempered in constitution to the climate of Britain, capable of being nourished by some of our indigenous plants, endowed, at the same time, with the faculty of perpetuating their kind, and of spinning a silk equal, if not superior, to that imported from warm regions.” The idea is ingenious, and is supported by at least plausible reasoning ; but its practicability and usefulness have never, so far as we have learned, been put to the test of experiment.

IN Chap. IV. the author treats of the Varieties of Man, which have been discovered in every region of the globe: and of the varieties in Manners and Customs, Religion, War, Agriculture, Marriages, Burials, Government, Arts, Manufactures, &c. of the different nations of the world. Chap. V. is devoted to an extended essay on Dreaming, including an account of Somnabulism. Chap. VI. gives an account of Hibernation, or the torpid state to which some animals are reduced during winter. Chap. VII. is a curious disquisition on the language of beasts. Chap. VIII. contains miscellaneous remarks on the comparative pleasures and sufferings of animals. Chap. IX. is a treatise on poisonous animals, including an account of hydrophobia. Mr SMELLIE concludes the Philosophy of Natural History with the following remarks.

“ I HAVE now finished my original plan, with what success I know not. I shall only say, what every intelligent reader will easily perceive, that my labours have been great. Before I began the work, had I known the numerous authors which it was necessary to peruse and consult, I should probably have

shrunk back, and given up the attempt as impracticable, especially for a man so early engaged in the business of life, and the cares resulting from a family of no less than *thirteen* children, *ten* of whom are still in life.

“ IN the first and second volumes, I have endeavoured to unfold the general as well as distinctive properties of the vegetable and animal kingdoms. Occasionally I have done more. I have sometimes given pretty full characters both of the figure, dispositions, and manners of animals. In these descriptive discourses, MAN has not been neglected. Being the principal animal in this planet, he, of course, deserved particular attention, and it has not been with-held. The varieties of the human species, in every region of the globe, have been collected and described from the most authentic resources both ancient and modern. Even in the most uncultivated, and, to us, deplorable situation of the human race, evident traces of goodness, of genius, and of heroism, are to be found. These amiable qualities, it must be confessed, are too often sullied by cruelty, irascible passions, and every species of vice. But these qualities are universal, in whatever situation men

are placed, whether in a civilized or barbarous state of Society. The strangest and most unaccountable part of the history of mankind is that of their *eating* one another ; and yet, from the numerous evidences I have produced, it is impossible not to give credit to the shocking fact. The reality of *human sacrifices* is equally certain as the existence of *cannibals*. The diversity of dispositions, the versatility of genius, the great differences of taste and of pursuits, are strong characters of *Man*, and distinguish him eminently from all other inhabitants of this earth.”

AFTER the foregoing tolerably extensive account of the Philosophy of Natural History, and considering that one portion of it has been twenty years before the public, and the other part eleven, during which period its sale has been extensive, we may be excused from endeavouring to give any particular character of the work, more especially as the biographer of Mr SMELLIE might be suspected of favourable partiality. Yet he hesitates not to recommend this work as both highly instructive and amusing; and he is satisfied that it would form an excellent book of instruction for youth in the more advanced stages of edu-

cation, to whom, besides giving them just views of Natural History, it would teach the art of lucid arrangement of facts and arguments upon philosophical and physical subjects, in appropriately calm yet elegant language, divested of the tinsel of false rhetoric, or of dogmatical pedantry. In its nature and objects it is altogether unique, as we really have no other book of the kind in our language; and in its execution it is judicious and excellent.

IT would evidently appear that Mr SMELLIE at first proposed to have published the work by subscription, and accordingly issued a prospectus and proposals for that purpose. This prospectus he submitted to the correction of his two celebrated literary friends, Principal ROBERTSON, the illustrious author of several much admired historical works, and Dr HUGH BLAIR, Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University of Edinburgh, and author of five volumes of eloquent Sermons, which have had a most uncommon but well-deserved celebrity. The opinions and criticisms of such men must be interesting and curious, and are therefore here subjoined.

## No. CXLVI.

*Principal ROBERTSON to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

*October 1786.*

PRINCIPAL ROBERTSON presents his compliments to Mr SMELLIE, and returns thanks for the satisfaction which the perusal of his Prospectus has afforded him. He is persuaded that it will be an useful, entertaining, and popular book. According to his desire, he has proposed a few verbal corrections, some of which Mr SMELLIE will possibly adopt.

IN p. 3. l. 1. “*Though* both an useful,” &c. Awkward to begin the work with a *though*, which refers rather to what has gone before than to what is to follow.

Ibid. l. 5. from the bottom. “Worthy and ingenious friend;” perhaps too familiar in speaking of a person in such a rank of life. I know well how favourably Lord KAMES

thought of you ; but I would wish you to express yourself, “ My respectable and ingenious benefactor, or patron,” or, “ The late truly respectable and ingenious Lord\*,” &c.

P. 4. l. 6. Is not *subjects* a better word than *topics*† ?

Ibid. l. 23. I do not understand the meaning of “ perusal of multifarious topics.” I suppose you mean “ inspecting the various objects of Natural History‡”.

HAS MR SMELLIE seen a French book entitled *Variétés Literaires* ? In it there is an essay on the instinct of animals, which contains several curious facts, which might probably throw some light on Sect. xiv. and Sect. xx. It is in the College Library ; and if he wishes to see it, Dr ROBERTSON will procure it for him on Thursday.

\* Mr SMELLIE adhered to his own mode of expression, only adding *respectable*.

† This correction Mr SMELLIE adopted.

‡ Mr SMELLIE changed this to “ considering the multifarious subjects.”

## No. CXLVII.

*Dr HUGH BLAIR to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR, *North Mercheson, 2 Oct. 1786.*

I HAVE considered with care the *Prospectus* which you sent me; and, according to your desire, have made a few observations on the language, which in some places seems to require amendment. I send my observations inclosed. As to your general design, I approve it highly; and I hope and trust that you will find sufficient encouragement to proceed speedily. I beg you will put me down as one of your subscribers, as I promise myself both entertainment and instruction from your work. It should be your care to make it as perspicuous and popular as possible; a work not for the learned only, but for common readers. Wishing you success, I am with esteem, &c.

HUGH BLAIR.

*Inclosed critical Remarks.*

P. 3. l. 1. "THOUGH both an useful, &c." This method of beginning with the word *though* appears to me awkward\* and improper. The sentence will acquire much more dignity by being arranged thus; "Natural History, though both an useful, &c."

DR BLAIR likewise questioned the propriety of the title *Philosophy of Natural History*, and recommended another; but in this Mr SMELLIE did not acquiesce.

## No. CXLVIII.

*The Earl of FIFE to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR, *London 4. January 1787.*

I HAD much satisfaction in reading your translation of BUFFON. The subject you now bring forward, is with a view to instruct

\* It is singular that both of these illustrious men should couch their disapprobation of this mode of commencement in the very same terms.

and amuse, without any intention of improper flattery, or defamation of parties and individuals ; which I am sorry to say are the most lucrative publications of the present age. If you send me any of your papers, I shall give them about ; and if you have any thing to convey to a bookseller here, put it under my cover ; it shall be cared for. They may send any packet to me, and I shall forward it to you. I am, &c.

FIFE.

HAVING acquired a very respectable subscription, Mr SMELLIE endeavoured to dispose of the copy right to a bookseller for a valuable consideration. From a subsequent letter, it would appear that he had in the first place made the offer to Mr CREECH, with a view to have the proposal transmitted by him to Messrs WILLIAM STRAHAN and THOMAS CADELL, great proprietors of literary property, who had made many purchases of Scots productions in conjunction with Mr CREECH. Owing to some delay or demur on the part of Mr CREECH, with which we have not been made acquainted, Mr SMELLIE entered into a negociation with the

late Mr CHARLES ELLIOT, bookseller in the Parliament Square Edinburgh, who concluded a bargain with him upon extremely liberal terms, engaging to pay *one thousand guineas* for the copy right; besides *fifty guineas* for every subsequent edition of the work, over and above the employment of printing it. This was probably the largest sum that had ever been given, at least in Edinburgh, for the literary property of a single quarto volume, and evinced both the liberality of the bookseller, and the high estimation in which he very justly held the fame and talents of the author. It is remarkable that this bargain was finally concluded before a single page of the work was written; for though we have mentioned that some of the dissertations which compose this volume had been previously prepared for the once intended Lectures, Mr SMELLIE had only made collections and arrangements towards these dissertations, without having actually written any part of them. Mr ELLIOT died before the work was ready for publication, but the agreement was fulfilled by his executors.

IN his method of composition, as already hinted, the plan followed by Mr SMELLIE was to consider his subject maturely, and to reduce it into a regular order of arrangement, of which he noted down the heads or table of contents. He then studied the particular subdivisions with the utmost care, recording the facts and illustrations which his studies afforded, and the requisite authorities and quotations ; altering, amending, and rearranging, if necessary, as he went along. Being thus fully prepared for the final composition, he wrote out for the press *currente calamo* ; and, after a careful revisal of the language of his manuscript, committed it to the compositors in so correct a state, that the whole charge made by them for alterations on this volume of 526 quarto pages, uncommonly full of matter, for a first edition, was *only half-a-crown*. Perhaps an instance of accuracy unparalleled in the annals of literature.

IT has been already mentioned that Mr SMELLIE had first offered this work, through Mr CEECH of Edinburgh, to Messrs STRAHLAN and CADELL of London. This, and the circumstance of the work having been dis-

posed of to Mr ELLIOT, coming to the knowledge of Mr STRAHAN, he wrote Mr SMELLIE the following letter on the subject. It is not our province to explain any of those particulars which belonged exclusively to these gentlemen; but we certainly know that Mr CREECH continued in perfect amity with Mr STRAHAN and Mr CADELL, while both of these most respectable and extensive proprietors of literature lived. The probability is, that Mr SMELLIES pecuniary necessities could not wait the delay which was hardly possible to be avoided in a negociation carried on by an intermediate person at so great a distance from London; and that he prudently, as he thought, closed with a most liberal offer, from a most unexceptionable person at his door. Owing to circumstances, however, Mr SMELLIE failed to reap the advantages of his bargain, and the fruits of his talents and literary labours: For, though the bargain was most honourably fulfilled by Mr ELLIOTS trustees, they were legally prevented from so doing till after Mr SMELLIES death in 1795.

## No. CXLIX.

ANDREW STRAHAN, *Esq.* to *Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,

*London, 20 Dec. 1787.*

I LONG ago received a letter from you recommending a compositor, whom I immediately took into my house ; he is still with me ; and I have the satisfaction to tell you that he does no discredit to your recommendation.

YOUR letter also gave a detail of the reasons why you were driven into other hands in the disposal of your new work, by Mr CREECHS unaccountable delay in communicating your offer to us. I immediately sent your letter, as you desired, to Mr CADELL, who has somehow mislaid it ; and I have delayed from time to time writing to you, in hopes it would cast up.

THE whole business would have been easily and speedily settled, if you had written im-

mediately to us, which we wonder did not occur to you. We much wish that you had done so, and you should have received an explicit answer without delay. This matter cannot now be rectified, but we hope will be attended to in future. Mr CADELL desires me to present his compliments. I am, &c.

A. STRAHAN.

OF this *first* volume of the Philosophy of Natural History, a translation was made into German, with some additions, by Mr Rector LICHTENSTEIN of the university of Brunswick, accompanied with notes by Professor C. A. W. ZIMMERMAN of the same university. Of this translation the following account is given in the Analytical Review for January 1792. “The translation which has appeared at Berlin, of the first volume of SMELLIES Philosophy of Natural History, with some additions by LICHTENSTEIN, and notes by ZIMMERMAN, is much to be commended, both in regard to the additions and notes; though we think they sometimes err in differing from Mr SMELLIE.” It may be remarked, that this is extracted by the au-

thors of the Analytical Review, from the *Jenna* Miscellaneous Literary Intelligencer. The Philosophy of Natural History was also translated into French; and was reprinted at Dublin, Philadelphia, &c.

SOME of the opinions advanced in this volume, particularly the theories of Instinct and the Passions, were severely censured in the Supplement to the Edinburgh Encyclopedia Britannica; and notice is also taken of it in the Encyclopedia Perthensis, article *Instinct*, § 3. 5. 6. 8. and 10.

It is not the intention of the author of this work to enter at all into controversy upon any of the subjects which employed the pen of Mr SMELLIE; yet it may be observed, that prejudices of education, and circumstances in professional situation and pursuits, occasionally lead respectable men to be somewhat too severe in their reprehensions upon harmless and even praiseworthy philosophical discussions. Theologians are too apt to be ever on the watch against what they deem heterodox opinions in philosophical matters; and to be too jealous of any theories which seem in any respect contradictory to the narrow dogmas of their own exclu-

sive sect. **GALILEO** was condemned by ignorant churchmen to a prison, for asserting the sphericity of the earth, and for broaching or reviving the doctrine of the Antipodes, both now perfectly ascertained and universally acknowledged truths, but then believed to be contradictory to the Scripture: and he would certainly have been committed to the flames as an obstinate heretic, if he had not written a full recantation of his doctrines, which was perfectly satisfactory to the reverend inquisitors, though it convinced all the world of the truth of the positions it was apparently meant to disprove.

FROM the two following notes by the illustrious Dr ROBERTSON to Mr SMELLIE, it would appear that a proof of the first sheet of the Philosophy of Natural History had been submitted to his revisal and correction. In both of these notes, the dates of the year are omitted. That which is dated in April may probably have been written in 1789; perhaps when the work was begun at press. From the mention of the preface in the second note, dated in January, it must almost certainly have been written in 1790, at the close of the printing, as the preface is usually the last printed part of a work.

## No. CL.

*Principal ROBERTSON to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

*Edinburgh College, 28 April.*

DR ROBERTSON presents his best compliments to Mr SMELLIE. He has read the sheets with great pleasure and approbation. The matter, as far as he can judge, is instructive and ingenious, and the language is perspicuous, unaffected, and correct. He will venture to foretel the success of the work. He submits it to Mr SMELLIE whether, when he mentions some singular facts, he ought not to specify that they rest on observations which he himself has made, or else should refer to the author from whom they are borrowed. Dr ROBERTSON has made a stricture or two on the proof sheet.

## No. CLI.

*Principal ROBERTSON to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

*College, 13 January.*

DR ROBERTSON presents his compliments to Mr SMELLIE. Returns the proofs with

some strictures, very few and minute indeed, but such as will shew that he was disposed to criticise with severity, if there had been any room for it. The preface is sensible and well written.

IT would appear that Mr SMELLIE, several years before the publication of the first volume of the *Philosophy of Natural History*, had given a perusal of the manuscript essay on *Instinct*, the substance of which forms the *fifth* chapter of that work, to COSMO GORDON, Esq. one of the Barons of the Scots Court of Exchequer, by whom the next subsequent letter was sent to Mr SMELLIE on returning the manuscript. This is followed by an anonymous letter on the subject of this work, sent to Mr SMELLIE after the publication, without any date of time or place, but bearing the London post mark of the 14th October, probably of the year 1790.

No. CLII.

*The Honourable Baron COSMO GORDON to  
Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,

*Edin. 9 Feb. 1786.*

I RETURN your Essay on *Instinct*, which I have repeatedly perused with much satis-

faction. It is a new method of accounting for the great superiority of the human mind, without the necessity of supposing it altogether different from that of the brute creation. I have not had time to investigate what might be the consequence of your theory on the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and you have altogether avoided it; judging I presume, very properly, that the exercise of philosophical observation may be innocently indulged, without your meaning to impair religious belief. In the reading, one or two remarks occurred, which, as you kindly permitted me, I will take the liberty to communicate.

THE basis of your theory consists in ascribing to the instinctive operations of mind what other philosophers have accounted for by the mechanical powers of organized matter. In enumerating *pure* instincts, which is the first class of your division, you mention a variety, in the paragraph beginning "The voiding of urine and excrement, sneezing," &c. I cannot agree with you, that the functions enumerated in that paragraph can be called instincts, according to your acceptation of the term. For, 1<sup>mo</sup>, all instincts that

you have elsewhere mentioned are energies employed upon, or towards some external object ; whereas these are altogether the consequences of the internal operations of the body upon itself, with regard to itself only, and without the aid or temptation of any external object whatever. *2do*, Instinct being, according to your theory, an operation of mind, no energy or function can be properly called instinctive, except what performs its operation in consequence of volition ; whereas the functions mentioned, in the fore-said paragraph, perform themselves without any act of will, and very frequently from necessity against the will. And, *lastly*, in my humble opinion, they are to be ascribed to mechanism, and not to instinct, according to a definition in your paper, that “ The idea of a machine implies a select combination of the common properties of matter.” Consider, then, how the functions mentioned in the fore-said paragraph produce their effects, Is it not by one or other, or by a combination, of the following causes ? viz. corruption, elasticity, pressure, and gravitation. And do not all philosophers, who admit the existence of matter, agree, that these are the common and inherent properties of it ?

GIVE me leave to submit another observation. You say, and in my opinion very justly, that, "What men or brutes learn by experience, though this experience be founded upon instinct, cannot with propriety be called instinctive knowledge." Agreeable to this definition, I question much whether Hope (though placed by the fable in Pandoras box with the rest) can be properly called an instinct, either *purely*, or by combination and degree. For, *first*, it seems to be your opinion, that there is no instinct in the human mind but what exists, in a greater or less degree, in the mind of some one or other of the brute creation: But I do not recollect to have observed, or been informed, of the exercise of any energy by any of them, either similar or analogous to Hope. I acknowledge indeed, that, to demonstrate the existence of such a feeling in the mind of a brute with conclusive certainty, is exceedingly difficult, and for that reason, perhaps, has never been attempted, at least so far as I know. Hope, considered as an instinct, you define to be "a modification of Love, as it is directed to future good." But, with great submission, I think your definition, or rather your analysis of Hope, is

defective ; because, besides the love or desire for future good, the idea of hope involves likewise the prospect or expectation of attaining it. For instance : A man might love the notion of being Governor-general of Bengal, and might foresee much future good from the appointment ; but he could never be said to hope for it without some prospect or expectation of attaining it. Again : An adventurer in the lottery, who loves the L.20,000 prize, and foresees that much future good would result from his being so fortunate, may, with great propriety, be said to hope for it ; because he buys into the lottery with that prospect, and may reasonably indulge the same expectation of drawing it as any other person who is not possessed of a greater number of tickets : Nay, no inferiority of chance, while the prospect remains, can prevent him from hoping for the highest prize.

LET US suppose a person brought into the world at once, with all the instinctive powers of the human mind as full and complete as in the ordinary course of things, without any assistance from education or experience, they would be at the age of twenty. Such a per-

son, from the two great instincts, would love, hunger, and thirst ; but he would not be carried beyond the gratification of immediate wants, nor to any objects but those present and in view. He would have no idea of future good ; consequently, neither love towards it, nor prospect or expectation of attaining it : No hope, therefore, could be said to exist in his mind, either as a pure instinct, or as a mental quality composed of various instincts, either by combination or degree. In conclusion, I should, with great deference, consider Hope as an artificial habit of the mind, acquired by observation and experience rather than an instinct or a combination of instincts. We know, from observation and experience, that certain things, not now in our possession, would be good for us ; we have observed others, by labour, exertion, and perseverance, acquire the possession and property of such things ; we ourselves resolve to employ the same labour, exertion, and perseverance, in obtaining some objects that we love and desire to have, and we employ our endeavours in the prospect and expectation of being successful. In such circumstances, what is it that creates Hope, or that properly can be demonstrated such ? Not

instinctive love directed to future good, but an artificial habit of the mind or judgment derived from the recollection and experience of former occasions, when endeavours and exertions similar to ours ensured the success which we are desirous to attain.

WHAT has amused me for an hour or two in the morning, may give you the trouble of a few minutes to read; but I flatter myself will be forgiven from, Sir, &c.

COSMO GORDON.

P. S. I HAVE read the work of a Swedish Physician, who travelled lately into Caffraria and Hottentot land, and who treats your friend, M. BUFFON, with much exultation and some acrimony.

No. CLIII.

*To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE from \*\*\*\*\**

SIR,

*No date.*

I HAVE just had the pleasure of reading your very ingenious and elegant performance,

entitled the *Philosophy of Natural History* ; and, in hopes that the public may demand future editions of it, and may see them with as few flaws as possible, I send you the following observations that occurred to me upon the perusal of your book. In your Preface, you modestly make an apology for Scotticisms, which might have been omitted in a work that has hardly any ; and for the following reason likewise. How many Scotticisms are there which are good Anglicisms, though little used in England ; and which, I may add, ought to be used ? The perusal of Mr PINKERTONS dissertation on the antiquities of our island has given me this paradoxical idea, which I shall now explain. All over Yorkshire, particularly towards the east, a numerous vocabulary of Scotch words may be traced ; and many of them, though only part, are enumerated by MARSHALL, in his state of the northern agriculture. Now, how have these Scottish words got into that quarter ? Not certainly by any conquest from Scotland that history records, or any Scotch emigration thither, as to Ulster in Ireland. For example, the word *kirk*, so frequent in the northern counties of England, could never have thrust out the word *church*,

from a preference to the Scottish dialect. The idea then that I engrift upon Mr PINKERTON is, that the Scandinavian phraseology overspread the eastern part of the island from north to south at a very early period ; and the innovations, which afterwards turned that phraseology into English, did not diffuse themselves so generally in Yorkshire and Scotland, as in the southern parts of the island ; but that Yorkshire and Scotland have retained each the primitive speech, without borrowing it the one from the other. Were harmony then, or expressiveness, or even consistency to be consulted, our innovators, instead of spurning at every vocable from the north, ought to adopt many from that source, in preference to Latin and French words. *Bestow*, for instance, is just as good and as musical a word as *confer* ; and I suspect can plead a greater antiquity of naturalization.

THE great stumbling-blocks of Scotchmen are *shall and will*, and *should and would* ; and, in p. 2. l. 20, I, as a Scotchman many years resident in England, suspect you have said we *would*, instead of we *should* ; and in no other part of your book have I met with the same Scotticism, if it be one, repeated. In

p. 12. line last, I should have preferred *un-folding* to development, as you have done in other places. In p. 40. l. 20. you join the word *whole* to a plural, which is a very rank Scotticism, or rather a barbarism; for *whole*, in its very nature, implies unity, and not plurality. No person ever saw in Latin *toti homines*. Scotch writers and speakers, I observe, are very guilty of this solecism, particularly the advertisers in the newspapers, I suppose illiterate agents and factors. Instead of the *whole* woods or the *whole* horses to be sold, an Englishman would say *all the* woods, *all the* horses, or the *whole of the* woods and horses. He would stumble at the expression, *whole horses*; and would ask whether the horses were ever sold in pieces; *whole*, in one sense, may be joined to a plural, but still implying unity; as, 'whole nations have erred.' Your oversights in this way, which I have remarked, besides others that may have escaped me, are in p. 208, 303, 370, and 421. In this last page, instead of the *whole* community *are*, I doubt, it should be, the *whole* community *is*. Community, by itself, may be either singular or plural; but, when joined with *whole*, unity is implied. Another form of expression I have met with, which, if not

a Scotticism, is at least used by Scotch writers fifty times for once that it is to be met with in English writers ; I mean placing the participle present after a preposition, in this manner : *Before concluding*, p. 63. when commonly the English use a nominative with the verb ; thus : *Before I or we conclude*. I have not leisure at present to give this a discussion, and to examine whether it be agreeable to the analogy of our language. I can only observe that it is very little the practice in England, and should suspect is not once to be found in the History of HENRY II. by Lord LITTLETON, who was very chaste and correct in point of true English phraseology. The French, it is true, use the infinitive after their prepositions ; as, *avant de parler*, anciently, *avant que de parler* : But one cannot conclude from the usage in one language to that of another. I have found this mode of expression repeated in p. 67, 98, 178, 331, 360, 386.

YOUR work, I think, may justly be ranked among the useful, as you have combined a mass of elegant instruction with much judgment and taste. May not the quarto form of it in some measure tend to lessen the sphere of

its usefulness? for perhaps the young and the fair sex, who might reap the greatest benefit from the perusal, will be deterred by the size of the volume. No inducement should be neglected that would tempt the fair sex to the acquirement of scientific knowledge, for which their desire is not so strong as proper attentions in their education would render it. An edition in octavo, or large duodecimo, in smaller letter, like the Spectator, or Nature Displayed, with such additions and alterations as your judgment can well point out, and your farther information affords, would probably be acceptable to the public.

THOUGH finished with much care, I yet conceive it susceptible both of some retrenchments and some additions. Hard names, without explanation, as *phlogiston*, ought to be avoided. In such a philosophical work, I think it is unphilosophic to use the word **Nature** so frequently. In p. 73. l. last but one, there is a little ambiguity in, *It is*, and the same in p. 74. l. 5. in the words, *of which*. In p. 157. for *incapable* read *capable*. In p. 179. l. 14. the definition of light, *Rays that proceed in direct lines*, conveys the idea of continued threads, like those of a spiders

web ; whereas, a successive issuing of infinitely small particles, and I may add invisible particles, is more likely to be the nature of light. In p. 337. l. 12. it would be more accurate to say, “ For the sake of strengthening the work, the middle of the base of the cells of one stratum is placed upon one of the angles of the cells in the reversed or back stratum :” Examine a honey comb. In p. 514. l. last but two, for Zehott, read Zedcote. I am not sure whether the gentlemans name be Ashcott or Arshcott ; but you have misspelt the name of his place. In p. 519. l. 9 ; is your consequence just ? Wont *time* appear much, much longer to the idle saunterer than to the meditating philosopher ?

I HAVE only to add, that the book is fairly printed ; yet, in some degree, I found it a fault that it was too fairly printed, an error in too many modern books, in which the ink may properly be affirmed to be only *half black* : For I can read a book printed near a hundred years ago in the same sized character as easily with one candle, as yours with two. The modern ink, I suspect, is used too thin, and consequently enough is not left upon the surface of the types. You, and some other modern Scotch writers, give a proof how

much purity of speech and propriety of idiom are now studied in Scotland ; and I have great pleasure to observe that the young lads who now come from Scotland are greater proficients in these particulars, most essential to making their fortune here, than many of their vulgar country men and country women who have been thirty years in London.

*No Signature.*

No. CLIV.

*To Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE from \*\*\*\*\**

SIR, Edinburgh, 24th June 1790.

I HAVE lately read your excellent book on the Philosophy of Natural History. It is a treatise which not only does honour to yourself, but to your country ; and I hope it will have the happy effect of not only diffusing a taste for Philosophy and Natural History among many who have neglected that useful branch of polite learning, but will excite those who have made it their study to carry their researches and experiments to greater lengths. The reason of my troubling you

at present, is on account of some curious and useful observations you make upon the *Bee*, which I dont rightly understand. In p. 95. you observe, "That the Males have no sting; but the Females, and the Drones, or Neuters, have a very sharp one." By the Females, I suppose you mean the Queen bees, and by the Drones or Neuters the working bees. You also observe in p. 387, that "A society or hive of bees consists of a female, of males, and of drones or neuters." In both of these places, the drones or neuters, I imagine, are the same with the working bees. But, in p. 388, you say, "The drones or *males* are larger than the working bees." I imagine there is an inconsistency between the two first and the last of these passages, but am not certain; and would esteem it a particular favour if you would take the trouble of setting me right.

THERE is also another point respecting bees of great consequence to be known. In p. 345, you inform us, from the observations of MARALDI, REAUMEUR, and DEBRAW, that there are two kinds of males in each bee hive, a larger and lesser kind. Now, as far as I remember, it has not been determined by experiments

whether both of these kinds of males have the power of impregnating the ova of the Queen bee, or only one of them. The experiment might easily be made. I beg pardon for the trouble I give you, and am, Sir, &c.

## B.

THE second volume of the *Philosophy of Natural History* was left, as formerly mentioned, complete in manuscript by Mr SMELLIE, and was published in 1798, three years after his death, by his eldest son, Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE. While composing the *sixth* chapter of that volume, “ Of those animals which sleep, or continue in a torpid state, during winter,” the following correspondence took place between Mr SMELLIE and the present Dr ALEXANDER MONRO, sen. who has now been Professor of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh for nearly half a century.

## No. CLV.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Dr MONRO.*

DEAR DOCTOR, *Edinburgh 17. March 1794.*

I AM about to ask a great favour. Being at present occupied in writing a chapter of my second volume upon the state of those animals which *sleep during winter*, I recollect of hearing that you some years ago had made some experiments upon that curious subject. I know not whether these experiments were ever made public. If they were, I beg to know how I shall see them; if not, may I beg a perusal of your notes made in the course of these experiments? Be assured that no improper use shall be made of what you please to communicate, for honourable mention shall be made of the author. I am, Dear Doctor, your old scholar, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CLVI.

*Dr MUNRO to Mr SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR,              *Edinburgh 20. March 1794.*

MANY years ago, during a severe winter, I kept a hedge-hog in a room without a fire from November till March. I laid beside him, in a press with a latticed door, pieces of boiled beef, bread, cheese, potatoe, water, and straw. During three months, I did not perceive that he eat or drank ; and I found him constantly in a sound sleep among the straw, but his limbs were never rigid. He lost of his weight between two and three ounces.

FROGS, which I kept during the winter, in a vessel with water, seemed to be in a similar state.

I HAVE not, however, prosecuted such experiments with all the accuracy which the curiosity of the subject merits. I am, &c.

ALEX. MONRO.

## No. CLVII.

Mr SMELLIE *to* Dr MONRO.DEAR DOCTOR, *Edin.* 13 *April* 1794.

I RETURN you sincere thanks for your communications with regard to the hedge-hog and frogs. I still wish to know if you can recollect when the animal awoke, and what circumstances attended his reviviscence. This is, in some measure, necessary to satisfy the reader, as otherwise the narrative has the appearance of being incomplete. I beg pardon for this intrusion upon your time, which I know is at all times sufficiently occupied. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CLVIII.

Dr MONRO *to* Mr SMELLIE.DEAR SIR, *Edin.* 13 *April* 1794.

THE hedge-hog began to be affected with drowsiness about the beginning of December

1764, but continued to eat, though more sparingly, till the 25th of that month. From that time, till the 8th of March following, it continued in a profound sleep, except when roused; and after being roused, it walked back to its place of retreat, and again laid itself for sleep. On the 25th December, it weighed 13 ounces 3 drachms; on the 6th of February 11 ounces 7 drachms; and on the 8th of March 11 ounces 3 drachms; having therefore lost in all two ounces of its weight.

A SMALL quantity of feculent matter was found among the hay; and at one time I observed some urine on the shelf. No person was present at the time of its awakening and resuming its usual functions. I have mentioned the year, because the duration of its sleep was probably proportioned to the cold of the season. I am, &c.

ALEX. MONRO.

THE following series of letters on the subject of this second volume of the Philosophy of Natural History are inserted without any commentary. They may give some insight

into the nature of those negotiations which take place between authors and booksellers about the purchase of literary property. Mr SMELLIE died without being able to bring this treaty to a conclusion; and his son afterwards published the volume on his own account.

## No. CLIX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr JOHN BELL,  
*Bookseller.*

DEAR SIR,

Edin. 26 July 1792.

I HAVE considered seriously the subject of our intended connexion with the second volume of the *Philosophy of Natural History*, and feel an inclination that the bargain should be settled as soon as possible; because it would give a considerable spring to my industry and attention. When the bargain is finished, it will be a mutual interest that it should not be generally known; because many of my friends, who are both numerous and respectable, if they knew that the book was

sold, would not exert themselves so strenuously in promoting the subscription.

I HAVE been advised, if you and I should not close, to change the title into Essays and Dissertations on various branches of Natural History, &c. and to offer it to the London market. This would be a new book ; but, as it really is a continuation of the former, I naturally incline that the title should not be altered. These ideas, which are explicit, I submit to your consideration, and expect an answer in three weeks from this date. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CLXX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr JOHN BELL.

DEAR SIR,

*Edin.* 22 Dec. 1794.

I HAVE to acquaint you, that the second and last volume of my Philosophy of Natural History is now finished and ready for the press. As you, and some of your friends in the trade, are possessed of the property of

the first volume, and must naturally wish to have the command of the entire book, I submit to your consideration the following offer. For the first volume I got one thousand guineas ; fifty pounds for every new edition of 1000 copies ; and the printing of the whole as long as by law the property should last.

Now, Sir, I make you an offer of this volume on the terms I actually obtained for the first. Besides, if this offer suits you, I have to throw into your hands about 800 *subscriptions* of the best gentlemen in this country ; and, if managed with propriety, before the book be published, the number of *subscribers* will at least be doubled. I have to add, that the numerous purchasers of the first volume will naturally wish to be possessed of the second, as no man inclines to have an imperfect and unfinished work, especially in the literary line. An answer, when convenient, will oblige yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

X 2

## No. CLXXI.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to THOMAS PENNANT,  
*Esq.*

SIR, Edin. 8 May 1793.

I HAD the honour of receiving yours of the 3d current. With regard to your friend Mr PATON, he is in perfect health and spirits, and wishes to be remembered to you.

I THANK you heartily for your kind inquiries concerning me. I am ready to go to press, whenever a proper bargain shall be obtained, with the second and last volume of my Philosophy of Natural History, of which I inclose you a proof copy of the Prospectus, which is not yet made public. This will enable you to form some idea of the work. If you take the trouble of giving me your advice and assistance, I shall ever acknowledge them with gratitude, as I am certain they will be the means of greatly improving the work. I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CLXXII.

THOMAS PENNANT, *Esq.* to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.

SIR, *Brightelmstone, 1 June 1793.*

ON receipt of your favour, I immediately laid before Mr FAULDER your letter and Proposals. Inclosed is his answer. As I have left town, I must leave the affair to be settled between yourselves. I heartily wish success to your plans, especially as they are of the most meritorious nature. I offer my name for two sets; and remain, Sir, &c.

THO. PENNANT.

## No. CLXXIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to THOMAS PENNANT,  
*Esq.*

SIR, *Edinburgh 25. June 1793.*

I HAD the pleasure of receiving yours of the 1st current. I am highly obliged to

you for the attention you have paid me with regard to the disposal of my book. I write this post to Mr FAULDER; and I shall endeavour to obviate and explain all his *desiderata*.

I HOPE all your good family are in such a condition as you would wish them. Nothing worth the communicating is going on in this phlegmatic part of the island. I have the honour, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

#### No. CLXXIV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr ROBERT FAULDER, Bookseller, London.

SIR,

Edinburgh 25. June 1793.

A FEW days ago, I had a letter from my worthy and valuable friend, Mr PENNANT, inclosing one from you concerning the disposal of my *Philosophy of Natural History*.

Now, Sir, I shall endeavour to solve all your difficulties, with all the candour I am

possessed of, neither concealing nor magnifying a single circumstance.

OF the first volume, I delivered to Mr ELLIOT, of this place, two thousand and ninety-four books. His unlooked for death certainly did no good in promoting the sale. When Mr ELLIOT'S books and property were auctioned, the property and remaining copies of the impression were purchased by Mr JOHN BELL of Edinburgh, and the Messrs ROBINSONS at London.

WITH regard to the sale of this very large impression, I can only inform you, that Mr BELL, within these two months, has been thinking of throwing off a new edition. The book has been re-printed in Philadelphia and in Dublin. It has likewise been translated into German, by Professor ZIMMERMAN of Berlin. These facts are at least honourable to the author; but whether, as an article of trade, they may be of value to the booksellers, they alone must judge.

WITH an easy, and even a popular change in the title page, I can make it a new book. But, I now think as a bookseller, by retain-

ing the title, and making it volume second, the numerous purchasers of the first would wish to be possessed of the second, as no man wishes to have an uncompleted work.

I BELIEVE I mentioned to Mr PENNANT the conditions of sale for the first volume, which were a thousand guineas for the property, and fifty pounds for every subsequent impression of a thousand copies, and so in proportion.

Now, my dear Sir, you have every atom of this matter as well as myself. Let me hear your offer; and it is to be hoped that we shall come to an agreement in an amicable manner. I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

N. B. I AM ready this instant to put the work to press.

## No. CLXXV.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to the Earl of FIFE.*

MY LORD, *Edinburgh February 27. 1794.*

ENCOURAGED by your Lordships former instances of kind attention, and to show that I am not altogether idle, a Prospectus of the second and last volume of the Philosophy of Natural History is herewith sent.

I WISH that copies of the Prospectus should be given to the King and the Prince of Wales : But, as I know not the proper mode of accomplishing this purpose, may I beg information from your Lordship ? I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CLXXVI.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr LACKINGTON,  
Bookseller, London.*

DEAR SIR,            *Edinburgh April 10. 1794.*

I RECEIVED yours of the 7th current. I am obliged to you for your intention of promoting my subscription list. The book will be published the ensuing winter, and I know it is in your power to do much. The price in boards is *one guinea*. The price to the trade is *sixteen shillings* in sheets. But if you subscribe for a considerable number, you shall have them somewhat *lower*.

SHALL I ever have the pleasure of again drinking and laughing with you in Edinburgh?

THIS place, at present, and as usual, affords no news worth the communicating. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CLXXVII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr JOHN BELL.*

MY DEAR SIR, *Edinburgh March 16. 1795.*

I HAVE a letter from your friend, Mr GEO. ROBINSON, London, concerning the copyright of my 2d and last vol. of the *Philosophy of Natural History*, dated March 11. 1795, in which he informs me, that he wrote to you on the subject of the same date. In this letter, he refers to you to treat with me; and promises that to whatever you think proper to report, he will give an immediate answer. It is difficult for two *cripples* to meet, otherwise I should be happy to see you. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## CLXXVIII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Messrs BELL & BRADFUTE.*

GENTLEMEN, *Edinburgh March 26. 1795.*

I RECEIVED yours of the 23d current, and thank you for your offer. But I submit to

to yourselves, if you would not think me a perfect *idiot* to accept of it. 1500 copies to be thrown off at your expence, and 500 of those to be given me for the copy-right! I never was, nor, I hope, ever shall be a retailer of books, as I am totally unqualified for that business. Does it not seem to be ridiculous, that an author should dispose of the copy-right of a book, not for money, but for a few copies of the book itself? Notwithstanding all my labour, which has been very great, I would rather consign it to everlasting oblivion.

SOME time ago, you obligingly offered, on the supposition that I was to print the book at my own risk, to furnish the paper, and to accept payment in copies. But the present plan is completely inadmissible, and never again to be dreamed of. I am, Gentlemen,

Your obliged humble Servant,

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

ABOUT the year 1791 or 1792, Dr JOHN ROTHERAM, a native of Newcastle upon Tine,

where his father had been a physician of considerable eminence, came to reside at Edinburgh, where, through the introduction of Mr CREECH, he became acquainted with most of the literary people of that place, and with Mr SMELLIE among others. Dr ROTHERAM was a gentleman of considerable learning, particularly in the various branches of the medical profession, and was well acquainted with mathematics and the mechanical philosophy. He is besides said to have been a favourite pupil of the illustrious professors, LINNAEUS and BERGMAN, under whom he studied at Upsal in Sweden. After spending a short time as private tutor in the family of Mr PATERSON of Castle Huntly, in the carse of Gowrie, he returned to Edinburgh, where he was employed by Mr CREECH to superintend new editions of some of his property books ; particularly a general System of Anatomy compiled from various sources, the Edinburgh New Dispensatory, and CULLENS first lines of the Practice of Physic, to which last he added a series of practical notes, principally containing formulae of medicines as adapted for the different diseases, and their doses. He became assistant for some time to the illustrious Dr BLACK, pro-

professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, then in a declining state of health, and read a considerable portion of the chemical lectures for that eminent philosopher, excellent physician, and amiable man, the Father of the Modern Chemical Philosophy, during several Sessions.

BEING disappointed in his hopes of succeeding Dr BLACK in the Edinburgh chemical chair, in consequence of the election of Dr Tho. HOPE, son of the late professor of Botany, who has been already mentioned as one of the early friends and patrons of Mr SMELLIE, as joint professor and successor to Dr BLACK, Dr ROTHERAM was successfully recommended by some of his friends at Edinburgh to fill a vacancy which took place in the University of St Andrews, as Professor of Natural Philosophy, for which he was well qualified by his scientific knowledge. He died in St Andrews of an apoplexy.

ON his first coming to Edinburgh, where he was then an utter stranger, Dr ROTHERAM published a pamphlet, chiefly with a view of bringing himself into notice, entitled,

*The Sexes of Plants Vindicated*, in a Letter to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE; the main object of which was to controvert and overturn the doctrines, facts, and arguments of chapter IX. sect. ii. in the *first* volume of the Philosophy of Natural History, in which Mr SMELLIE had endeavoured to impugn and overthrow the hypothesis of the sexual generation of vegetables, on which LINNAEUS had founded his celebrated system of classification. It would occupy too large a portion of these Memoirs to enter largely into this controversy between Mr SMELLIE and Dr ROTHERAM; or, more properly speaking, the attack made by Dr ROTHERAM on Mr SMELLIES doctrines, for Mr SMELLIE made no reply: But it may be proper to give a very condensed view of the arguments used by both.

*Abridgment of Mr Smellics Discourse on the Sexes of Plants.*

THIS discourse, as we learn from a note in the Philosophy of Natural History, vol. i.

p. 245. was originally written by Mr SMELLIE, when a very young man, and attending the lectures on botany, as a prescribed exercise directed by the professor, the late worthy and learned Dr JOHN HOPE, and was delivered in presence of the Professor and all the Students then attending at the botanic garden. It was afterwards published in the first edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and finally worked up anew into the *second* section of the *ninth* chapter of the *Philosophy of Natural History*. Mr SMELLIE says that when he undertook the task, he considered the sexual vegetable hypothesis of LINNAEUS to be established upon the firmest basis of fact and experiment, and, being allowed the liberty of opposing it, conceived that he had a chance of showing some little ingenuity in attempting to shake a received theory. But, after perusing the works of LINNAEUS, and many other books on the subject, “ He was astonished to find that this theory was supported neither by facts nor arguments which could produce conviction even in the most prejudiced minds.” The main scope of his argument against the distinction of sexes in plants, is, 1. That its principal support is derived from a beautiful and plausible analogy

between plants and animals ; while even numberless species of vine-fretters, polypi, millipedes, and infusory animalcules, multiply without sexual influence. 2. The analogy between plants and oviparous animals fails, in so far as animal eggs can only be impregnated while in the gelatinous or mere embryo state, while vegetable seeds have mostly acquired considerable bulk and solidity before the supposed fecundating polen is expelled from its capsules. 3. The propagation of plants by suckers, slips, cuttings, and layers, is a farther contradiction of the analogy. 4. The most plausible evidences of the sexual influence in vegetables, derived from facts relative to the date-palm, and other dioicous plants, are declared imperfect, equivocal, and indecisive. 5. An experiment is produced with the female *Lychnis dioica*, which, without the possibility of male impregnation, produced ripe and fertile seeds, for three or four successive years ; and this is confirmed by similar experiments on the pumpion, or gourd, by SPALLANZANI.—Mr SMELLIE thus concludes : “ From the facts and arguments related, it appears that this beautiful theory, derived from mistaken analogy, has no foundation in nature.”

*Abridgment of Dr Rotheram's Defence of the Sexual Hypothesis.*

THIS reply was published by DR ROTHERAM at Edinburgh, in 1790, in an octavo pamphlet of 43 pages, entitled “The Sexes of Plants vindicated, in a letter to MR WILLIAM SMELLIE,” &c. We shall abstract his arguments in a corresponding manner to those already given from MR SMELLIES discourse. 1. He asserts that analogy is only employed by the sexualists as a collateral argument, while its principal supports are derived from facts, from a consideration of the parts of fructification, and from the very satisfactory manner in which the theory explains many phenomena of nature, and assigns uses to those parts of the flower which, on any other supposition, would seem entirely useless. He alleges, likewise, that MR SMELLIE has been unfortunate in adducing the polypus as an example of animal reproduction without sexual influence, as it of all animals approaches nearest to the nature of a vegetable; asserting, from TREMBLEY, that the polypus is propagated by buds, which fall

off and become perfect animals, in a similar manner with some vegetables, of which the seeds vegetate while in the seed-vessel, and fall to the ground perfect plants, as the onion-tree, some of the liliaceous tribe, and some of the genus *allium*. The organs of generation in the polypus may, besides, be too small to be discoverable by the most accurate observers.

2. In controverting the opinion of Mr SMELLIE respecting the failure of analogy between the eggs of birds and seeds of plants, Dr ROTHERAM asserts that the eggs of hens are impregnated only a few hours before extrusion, and after being invested with a thick tough membrane; and that the eggs of many insects are formed long before the metamorphosis takes place, and consequently even many months before impregnation; while, on the other hand, though the seeds of most plants are likewise formed before impregnation, like those of animals, their principal increase is after the influence of the fecundating pollen has been applied. 3. In regard to the argument about suckers, slips, cuttings, and layers, Dr ROTHERAM refers entirely to a treatise in the *Amoenitates Academicæ*, entitled *Prolepsis Plantarum*; and says nothing

on the subject, except asking an inapplicable question, "Why an elm should produce 10,000 blossoms yearly from one root for many years, while the draba produces only eight or ten, and then dies for ever?" 4. Dr ROTHERAM defends the instances in favour of sexual influence derived from the date-palm and other dioicous plants, with much ingenuity and considerable success; but the facts on both sides are too long for abridgment. 5. He repels the conclusions drawn by Mr SMELLIE from his experiments with the female lychnis; and shews that Mr SMELLIE had by no means taken sufficient precautions to prevent the fecundating polen from being conveyed to the female flower by the winds, or by means of insects; and makes the same observation upon the experiments of SPALLANZANI with the pompion or gourd."

THESE are the principal arguments on both sides; and we presume not to decide on this curious question in the physiology of vegetables. The concluding sentence in Dr ROTHERAMS pamphlet is peculiarly liberal and polite, and ought assuredly to regulate the conduct of all who would be considered as philosophers and searchers after truth in

matters of science. “ To differ in opinions with a weak man, is the surest method to offend him : But to canvass, liberally, controverted points with a true philosopher (which title I am convinced, from the perusal of your book, and my personal acquaintance with you, that you justly merit) increases mutual esteem.”

THE celebrated orientalist Sir WILLIAM JONES gives the following strong sentiments against the sexual theory of vegetable generation. “ The allegory of sexes and nuptials of plants, even if it were complete, ought to be discarded, as unbecoming the gravity of men, who, while they search for truth, have no business to indulge their imaginations ; and, while they profess to give descriptions, have nothing to do with metaphors.” The justness, of this rule, in matters of science, is generally incontrovertible ; yet it is extremely difficult, in the search after truth, perhaps in some measure owing to the poverty of language, to steer entirely clear of allegory and metaphor, or, in other words, of analogical reasoning and language. Although there is a vast difference between the modes of

propagation of what are called the more perfect animals, or the *mammalia* of *LINNAEUS*, and the other classes ; yet no man of science has ever ventured to question the existence of males and females in fish, reptiles, and insects, or to deny that some of the worms possess both sexes in each individual. Analogy, and the most rigid observation, certainly discover organs containing something excessively resembling ova in vegetables, and other organs, which are or seem to be necessary for impregnating or influencing these ova, in the ovaria or receptacles of the seeds of plants. In numerous instances, it can be decisively ascertained, that this influence is indispensably necessary for the vivification or fertilization of these seeds, as certainly as that the influence of the male frog is necessary for vivifying or impregnating the ova or spawn of the female frog after extrusion. It cannot, therefore, be objected as unphilosophical, as a wanton indulgence of imagination, as prurient allegory, or improper metaphor, to ascribe this positive and certain influence to sexual power ; nor does language afford any other means of enunciating the fact. On this subject, it may be fairly said with *Swift*, that a person of extreme delicacy

is one of very nasty ideas. We do not pretend to pronounce a decisive judgment on the controversy ; but it may be remarked, that the objections of Mr SMELLIE are all founded upon negative proofs, the weakest of all facts in science ; and that, before the discovery of the microscope, similar negations of fact and observation had induced philosophers to believe in equivocal generation, and the production of insects from corruption. Not only have maggots, mites, and lice been considered as generated from corruption, filth, and dirt, but serpents have been believed the production of rotten horse dung, and mice to originate from the fermentation of the ouze left by the Nile.

MUCH about the same time with this controversy about the sexes of plants, a considerable sensation took place in Britain about a plan for establishing an uniformity of weights and measures, to be founded upon some invariable standard not liable to error, and which might be easily recoverable if accidentally lost. On this subject Dr ROTHERAM published a pamphlet, which was well thought of in Edinburgh at the time :

but of which we have not been able to procure any copy, so as to give an account of his plan in this place ; neither does it seem at all requisite in the Memoirs of Mr SMELLIE, that a subject in which he was no way connected should be inserted into this work by a mere side wind.

A SHORT while before his death, Dr ROTHERAM came over from St Andrews to Edinburgh, for the purpose of endeavouring to form arrangements for publishing the astronomical portion of his academical lectures, as a general system of astronomy. However well qualified he may have been for this subject, and we have reason to believe he was eminently so, the field was considered as pre-occupied upon this not very generally popular science, by the recent publication of the Astronomical Lectures of Professor VINCE ; and Dr ROTHERAM found no encouragement from the Edinburgh booksellers to commit his manuscript to the press.

WHEN Dr ROTHERAM prepared for Mr CREECH an edition of CULLEN'S First Lines of the Practice of Physic with notes, he found himself at some loss to construct a proper

Preface; and had actually written one in which the whole work of our celebrated professor was in a great measure held up to ridicule and contempt, and this even contrary to what Dr ROTHERAM himself intended. Mr SMELLIE, whom he consulted on this occasion, convinced him of this circumstance; and the Doctor requested of him to correct or re-write the Preface, which last was actually done by Mr SMELLIE, and printed along with that work. This assertion is not made on vague grounds, for we actually possess the preface in MS. as originally written by Dr ROTHERAM, and the almost entire change of the whole in the hand-writing of Mr SMELLIE, over against the deleted writing of Dr ROTHERAM.

THE following letters, which passed between Mr SMELLIE and Dr ROTHERAM, have been preserved. The first was written by the Doctor, under the idea that Mr SMELLIE had been offended by his pamphlet in answer to the Chapter on the Sexes of Plants. But he afterwards acknowledged to Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE, that his only design in writing this letter, was to try how Mr SMELLIE felt on the subject.

## No. CLXXIX.

Dr JOHN ROTHERAM *to* Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.

SIR, *Castle-Huntly, 4 May 1790.*

IF you are offended, I am heartily sorry for it. My objections to your Chapter on the Sexes of Plants were not, I assure you, meant to injure you; on the contrary, I supposed that, by being opposed, your book would possibly gain consequence. It was the doctrine, not the author, that I objected against.

FAVOUR me, I beseech you, with a letter, that I may be certain how the matter stands. Tell me freely what you think of the publication. My motives, I again assure you, were not inimical. Treat me then as a friend; and rest assured that I am, &c.

JOHN ROTHERAM.

## No. CLXXX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Dr JOHN  
ROTHERAM.

MY DEAR SIR, Edin. 9 May 1790.

YOUR letter surprised me. Instead of being offended at your publication, I have uniformly said, and actually consider it, as an honour to be opposed in any of my sentiments by a gentleman of your learning and talents. From the strain of your letter, I have been led to think, perhaps I am wrong, that you have been imposed upon by some vain, presumptuous, and lying *fool*!

WITH regard to the publication, you have not only treated me with candour, but praised me beyond my actual merit. For the future, I beg you will never allow yourself even to dream that I can ever be offended at any part of your conduct; because a gentleman of your disposition and literature can never extort offence from any man of honesty and common sense.

I SHALL be happy to hear from you with your first opportunity; and believe me to be, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CLXXXI.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Dr JOHN  
ROTHERHAM.

DEAR DOCTOR, Edin. 27 June 1790.

I SHOULD have written you sooner, but I am a very bad correspondent. I hope your fortification, ten and a half feet wall\*, will restrain your unruly passions. Old LINNAEUS, however, would have pierced through double the thickness to reach the librarian's wife †.

I really have nothing to say, but to remind you of my existence, and to express

\* Alluding to the thick walls of the ancient castle in which the Doctor now resided.

† This must allude to some current Upsal tattle, which the Doctor had mentioned respecting his old teacher LINNAEUS.

my ardent desire for your speedy escape to Edinburgh.

Poor Commissioner SMITH\* is making rapid strides to eternity ; and Lord MONBODDO, from the heavy stroke he has met with †, will probably soon follow him. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

WHEN BURNS, the celebrated Scots poet, came to Edinburgh in 1787, on occasion of the publication of his poems, Mr SMELLIE became acquainted with him in consequence of being employed to print these poems ; and as their social dispositions, and strong relish of sterling wit, were considerably similar, an intimacy took place which continued undiminished during their joint lives. The life of BURNS has been already given to the public by DR CURRIE, and it is only meant in

\* Dr ADAM SMITH, the celebrated author of the *Wealth of Nations*, who was for a good many years one of the Commissioners of the Scots Customs.

† Miss BURNETT of Monboddo, a beautiful, elegant, and accomplished young lady, died about this time.

this place to mention a few traits connected with Mr SMELLIE, and to insert some remains of a long correspondence which took place between these two literary characters, both eminent in their several departments, although a part of these were formerly communicated by Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE to Mrs MARIA RIDDELL of Woodley Park, who sent them to Dr CURRIE, for insertion in his well drawn life of the Ayrshire bard.—Many letters of BURNS to Mr SMELLIE which remained, being totally unfit for publication, and several of them containing severe reflections on many respectable people still in life, have been burnt.

THE following characteristic trait respecting the poet BURNS was communicated to the author of these Memoirs by Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE, and is here inserted in his own words. “ I perfectly remember the first appearance of BURNS in my fathers printing house in 1787, at the time his poems were printing. He was dressed much in the stile of a plain country man; and walked three or four times from end to end of the composing room, cracking a long hunting whip which he held in his hand, to the no small annoyance of the compositors and press-men; and, although

the manuscript of his poems was then lying before every compositor in the house, he never once looked at what they were doing, nor asked a single question. He frequently repeated this odd practice during the course of printing his work, and always in the same strange and inattentive manner, to the great astonishment of the men, who were not accustomed to such whimsical behaviour. The compositors, when they first got his poems to print, and before he had made this appearance among them, had been told that the work which they were employed to set up was composed by a common plough-man ; and, though I was at that time very young, the cracking of the whip, and the strangely uncouth, and unconcerned manner of BURNS, always impressed me with the notion that he wished to assume the clownish appearance of a country rustic ; and I have never been able to efface the impression that his behaviour proceeded from affectation.”

In the course of their intimacy, Mr SMELLIE introduced the poet to a social club in Edinburgh, called the Crochallan FENCIBLES, formerly mentioned as a scene of much free and festive mirth ; and it has been likewise

already noticed that Mr SMELLIE, at several of these meetings, used to let loose the whole powers of ironical and satirical humour, which he possessed in an eminent degree, against the poet, whom he used to lash most unmercifully. In consequence of this, BURNS retaliated in a short poetical sketch of Mr SMELLIE, which will be found towards the conclusion of these Memoirs, together with a characteristic letter from the poet, in which some of the leading features of Mr SMELLIES character will be found fairly delineated by the hand of a master.

IN September 1792, Mr SMELLIE made a journey to Dumfries, at the pressing solicitation of Mrs MARIA RIDDELL of Woodley Park, a lady of considerable literary talents, of whom mention will be made in the sequel: And, on this occasion, BURNS procured the freedom of that respectable town to be conferred on Mr SMELLIE by the Magistrates, who, it is believed, gave a public entertainment to these literary friends.

## No. CLXXXII.

*Mr ROBERT BURNS to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

*Dumfries, January 22. 1792.*

I SIT down, my dear Sir, to introduce a young Lady to you, and a Lady in the first ranks of fashion too.—What a task! You, who care no more for the herd of animals called young Ladies, than you do for the herd of animals called young Gentlemen. You, who despise and detest the groupings and combinations of Fashion; an idiot Painter that seems industrious to place staring Fools and unprincipled Knaves in the fore-ground of his picture, while men of Sense and Honesty are too often thrown in the dimmest shades.—Mrs RIDDELL, who will take this letter to town with her, and send it you, is a character that, even in your own way, as a Naturalist and a Philosopher, would be an acquisition to your acquaintance.—The Lady, too, is a Votary of the Muses; and as I think myself somewhat of a judge in my own trade, I assure you that her verses, always correct and often elegant, are much beyond the common run of the Lady-Poetesses of

the day.—She is a great admirer of your book ; and hearing me say that I was acquainted with you, she begged to be known to you, as she is just going to pay her first visit to our Caledonian Capital.—I told her that her best way was, to desire her near relation and your intimate friend, CRAIGDARROCH, to have you at his house while she was there ; and, lest you might think of a lively West Indian girl of eighteen, as girls of eighteen too often deserve to be thought of, I should take care to remove that prejudice.—To be impartial, however, in appreciating the Ladys merits, she has one unlucky failing, a failing which you will easily discover, as she seems rather pleased with indulging in it ; and a failing that you will as easily pardon, as it is a sin which very much besets yourself. Where she dislikes, or despises, she is apt to make no more a secret of it, than where she esteems and respects.

I WILL not present you the unmeaning “Compliments of the Season,” but I will send you my warmest wishes and ardent prayers, that Fortune may never throw your subsistence to the mercy of a Knave, or set your Character on the judgment of a Fool ;

but that Upright and Erect you may walk  
to an honest grave, where men of Letters  
shall say, here lies a Man who did honour to  
Science, and Men of Worth shall say, here  
lies a Man who did honour to Human Nature.  
I am ever, with the most grateful sincerity,  
my dear Sir, yours,

ROBT. BURNS.

### No. CLXXXIII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr ROBERT BURNS.*

DEAR ROBIN,

*July 13. 1793.*

You and I have of late been very costly correspondents. But, now that the fruit-season is nigh, perhaps we may get an *opening*, if not a *scour*.

BUT I must rush to the point. The bearer, GEORGE WATSON, is my son-in-law. He is a *painter*, and you are a *poet*, that is, both *liars* by trade. He is sent for to make a picture of our Reverend Father, Mr CRAIK of Arbigland. If you can be of any service to him, in the line of breaking the second com-

mand, by making likenesses of things under the Sun, I know you will.

My best wishes wait your spouse and bairnies\*. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CLXXXIV.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr Ro. BURNS.*

DEAR RABBY, *Edinburgh 4. March 1794.*

I SEND you a specimen of my employment for some time past. Another quarto volume, you see, is to be the consequence. I hope Mrs BURNS and the bairnies\* are as well as I wish them. With a little industry among your numerous friends, which I know you will exert, you may be of singular service to me. The booksellers, whose general dispositions you have some *reason* to know, fight shy. They think that no person will purchase the *second* volume, but the purchasers of the first. I at once saw through their mercenary intentions; and therefore, instead of pressing the labours of my brain and industry

\* Little Children.

upon them, I resolved to publish the book on my own account.

A FANCY has just struck me. You know, and God knows, that I am no poet. A few lines from you for the newspapers will be of great use. The poem will at least have this merit; it will be, perhaps, the first that ever was written on a Prospectus. The subjects are numerous: Your judgment will enable you to make a proper selection; and your fancy and ingenuity will suggest the cloathing and decoration. The demand is blunt, and so is Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

It is much to be regretted, for the reasons so frequently mentioned, that we are unable to communicate any further circumstances respecting our eminent Scots poet, whose works do much honour to our age and nation. His letters to Mr SMELLIE were inimitable; but all of such a nature as to be totally unfit for publication.

IN January 1792, BURNS introduced Mrs MARIA RIDDELL of Woodley Park in Dumfries-shire to the acquaintance of Mr SMELLIE,

by means of a letter which has been already inserted. That lady wrote a short account of a Voyage to the Caribbee Islands, interspersed with some well drawn observations on their Botany and Natural History, which work she dedicated to Mr SMELLIE. Mrs RIDDELL also wrote a very respectable critique on the poetical works of BURNS, and gave material assistance to Dr CURRIE, while engaged in composing the biography of that extraordinary genius. She is much celebrated by BURNS in several of his poems and letters, and was herself a poetess of considerable taste and merit. Her poetical effusions were characterized by the Ayrshire Bard, an excellent judge, and not much given to flattery, as “always correct, often elegant, and much beyond the common run of the lady-poetesses of the day.” Of the correspondence between this lady and Mr SMELLIE, the following letters have been preserved. The first of these, only a card without date, appears to have accompanied the introductory letter from BURNS of 22d January 1792. Like all the contents of Mr SMELLIES repositories, the remains of this correspondence are exceedingly imperfect, and often abrupt and unconnected: But it

may be mentioned, that an intimate friendship took place upon this occasion between **Mrs RIDDELL** and **Mr SMELLIE**, which continued till his death ; and it will appear by two letters from that lady to **Mr ALEXANDER SMELLIE**, which follow the correspondence with his father, that she continued to cherish the remembrance of her departed friend, and took an affectionate interest in the welfare of his family.

## No. CLXXXV.

*Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

*Sunday Evening, St Andrews-square.*

**MRS RIDDELL** presents her compliments to **Mr SMELLIE**, and encloses a note which she took charge of for him from **Mr BURNS**. **Mr SMELLIE** will see by the date, that it was written a week ago ; but **Mrs RIDDELL** was detained all that time on the road, and did not arrive at Edinburgh 'till this morning, otherwise she would certainly have sent it earlier to **Mr SMELLIE**.

## No. CLXXXVI.

*Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM SMELIE.*

DEAR SIR, *Woodley Park, 7th March 1792.*

A SON OF JOHN OGILVYS is just now on the wing for Edinburgh; and I cannot let slip such an opportunity of complying with your request of submitting some of my humble sketches of Natural History to your perusal. The manuscript which Mr OGILVY will deliver to you is, I fear, written in so abominable a scrawl, that you will have no small difficulty in decyphering it; but I have copied it entirely through since I saw you, and the hurry in which it has been done, is attended with another inconvenience not less serious than the first; I mean that of not having had leisure enough to look it over and correct it. You have it, therefore, "with all its imperfections on its head," and with full powers to blot out, criticise, amend, or, in short, to do what you please with it. If you think it worth the trouble, I should like the plan you were mentioning of printing 50 or 100 copies,

to save the trouble of writing it over for my friends, who are eternally asking me to do so ; and, considering the size of the manuscript, I think their demands rather unconscionable. I beg you to write soon. Tell me, with your usual candour, what you think of it. If it is your opinion, I shall not feel regret in seeing it buried in oblivion ; otherwise, in the hopes of its conduced to the amusement of those friends among whom I would distribute the copies, I will not mind the trifling expence of printing off the number already mentioned. You must understand, however, I mean the affair to be quite *entre nous*. God forbid I should have the vanity to think so trivial a performance could succeed beyond the narrow circle I mean it shall be confined to. In this case, I shall take no further concern about it, but leave the sole and entire management of it to you. Indeed, I shall consider myself under material obligations to you for undertaking the task, though I must remind you it was entirely your own proposal.

ARE you still determined on going to London about the second volume of your work ? I assure you I look forward with pleasure to

the prospect of seeing you in this part of the world in the course of the summer. ROBIE BURNS dined with us the other day. He is in good health and spirits; but I fear his muse will not be so frequent in her inspirations, now that he has forsaken his rural occupations in the line of agriculture. My better half often speaks with pleasure of the hours he spent in your company, and desires to be kindly remembered to you. Believe me, &c.

MARIA RIDDELL.

No. CLXXXVII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mrs RIDDELL.

DEAR MADAM, *Edin. March 27. 1792.*

I RECEIVED your most obliging letter by the hands of Mr OGILVY, who, I think, is an agreeable young gentleman. I received more; I received your MS. of Travels and Natural History. When I considered your youth, and still more, your sex, the perusal of your ingenious and judicious work, if I had not previously had the pleasure of your con-

versation, the devil himself could not have frightened me into the belief that a female human creature could, in the bloom of youth, beauty, and consequently of giddiness, have produced a performance so much out of the line of your ladies works. Smart little poems, flippant romances, are not uncommon. But science, minute observation, accurate description, and excellent composition, are qualities seldom to be met with in the female world,

WHY did you grapple with a soldier ? Mr RIDDELL I ever will revere, though not so much as yourself must do ; but if I could have had the happiness of having the company of a lady so well qualified to assist me in my favourite study, we *two* should have made a COUPLE of figures in the literary world !

I HAVE begun printing the book ; but I must submit a few remarks to your observation.

ONE hundred or one hundred and fifty copies for your friends is a modest, but I say, too modest an idea. Treat your friends

as you think proper ; but my opinion is, that you should print 500 copies, and allow them to be exposed to sale both in Edinburgh and London. I shall, therefore, proceed no further till I receive your commands on this point. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CLXXXVIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mrs RIDDELL.

DEAR MADAM, Edin. 11 April 1792.

I RECEIVED yours of the 30th March last, the contents of which gave me great pleasure. I may err both in sentiment and opinion ; but it is, God knows, no trick of mine to flatter either males or females. You may ask Poet BURNS, my friend, if flattery enters into any part of my character or conduct. You may put the same question to Mr RIDDELL of Glenriddell, who has sometimes *threatened* and *frightened* me with his immense *fist* and stentorian *voice*.

THE little book is now in the press, and will be published here in the beginning of May. Your anxiety about its fate is natural ; and all authors of sensibility have the same apprehensive feelings.

Mr HILL, bookseller, has undertaken the publication both here and at London. Your name, to quiet your conscience, shall be contracted MARIA R——, though I still think that it would do great honour to any \*\*\*\*\* in Britain. Take this as one example of my *flattery*. If ever I have the happiness to hear from you again, and if you persist in saying that I *flatter* you, depend upon it, you shall have specimens of a more severe nature. It is pretty singular that, whenever I write to a lady, from some unaccountable association of ideas, I am apt both to spell wrong, and to commit *grammatical* blunders. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

*P. S.* My mind has hitherto been so much engrossed with your dear self, that I had entirely forgot to beg my best respects to your husband, who, if enraged, would terrify me as much as the gigantic Glenriddell.

## No. CLXXXIX.

Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.

*Woodley Park, 10 Sept. 1792.*

MY DEAR SIR,

LEST the various avocations of business, which employ so much of your time, should have made you forget the promise you made of spending some time here with us ; I beg to jog your memory, by assuring you, that all your friends here anxiously expect the accomplishment of your engagement ; and, according to your appointment, the bearer of this waits your orders with a carriage : not the elevated tottering machine which you eschewed so much, but a good, easy, snug post-chaise ; and, if any of your friends want a cast into this part of the world, you can oblige them with a corner. I expect you, *Deo volante*, on Thursday evening or Friday morning ; and, with best wishes for your pleasant journey, I remain, &c.

MARIA RIDDELL.

## No. CXC.

Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM  
SMELLIE.

*Woodley Park, 16 Oct. 1792.*

DEAR SIR,

I AM extremely happy to hear of your safe arrival at Edinburgh, where I hope you found all your family as well as you left them. My little girl, whom you are so kind as to enquire after, got through the small-pox with a very slight eruption, attended by a most trifling degree of fever. She is now quite stout again, and as full of mischief as ever. Our Dumfries gaieties, the hunting, racing, dancing, &c. are just commenced, and I am preparing to be a votary of dissipation, I assure you. I saw a pretty girl this morning in town, who asked kindly after you, Miss \*\*\*\*\*, whom you flirted with so much at the Assembly in Dumfries. Your friends here are all well, and talk with pleasure of your friendly visit to them; which we hope was sufficiently agreeable to induce you, one

of these days, to make another excursion this way. As this is a busy time with us, I cannot prolong my letter beyond the first page ; but I could not longer defer thanking you for the pleasure you gave us in communicating your safe arrival so soon. My mother unites with RIDDELL and myself in best wishes for your health and welfare. Believe me, &c.

MARIA RIDDELL.

No. CXCI.

Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM  
SMELLIE.

*Woodley Park, 22 Nov. 1792.*

DEAR SIR,

I FEEL myself extremely indebted to your polite attention in sending me the criticisms of the Reviewers upon my publication. The approbation they express is certainly very flattering ; but surely more justly to be attributed to the lenity and usual degree of encouragement commonly bestowed upon the first essays of a youthful author, than to any

degree of merit or information that the work actually contains. However, be the motive what it may, I feel myself greatly relieved by their favourable treatment from the anxiety I could not but experience on the idea of its being made public. My little girl is much obliged by your kind remembrance of her. It is long since any traces of the small-pox were by any means discoverable about her. We are in hourly expectation of her acquiring another little play-fellow and relation. Pray tell your friend, Mr HILL, that my husband is very impatient for the books he purchased when last in Edinburgh, and requests he will forward them hither without delay. I do not think it improbable but we may see you in your own city some time in January. Mean time believe me, &c.

MARIA RIDDELL.

No. CCH.

Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM  
SMELLIE.

*Woodley Park, 17 Nov. 1793.*

DEAR SIR,

It is now so many months since you and I have had any communication with each other, either by speech, message, or letter, that I am almost afraid you will forget there is such a vegetable existing as myself; for a vegetable I am at present, in every sense of the word, rooted to one spot of earth, and with the mere privilege of ambulating backwards and forwards on my own grounds, which is no more than your creeping plant does every sun-shiney day in the botanic garden of Edinburgh; and in this state of confinement, it seems, I am to remain till it pleases my sovereign lord and master to release me from it by his return. I am as chaste and domestic, but perhaps not quite so industrious, as **PENELOPE** in the absence of her hero. I resemble rather the lilies of

the field: “I toil not, neither do I spin;” but I read, I write, I sing, and contrive to wile away the time as pleasantly as any sociable being, like myself, can do in a state of solitude, and in some measure of mortification.

I HAVE had many adventures, though none perhaps worthy of being recorded, except on the tablets of friendly solicitude, since we met in your flourishing city last February. I went to London the April following, and passed seven or eight weeks there, at the most dissipated season, and in the most dissipated company. And there, to use the equivocal language of our ecclesiastical confession, “I did so many things that I ought not to have done, and left undone so many things that I ought to have done, that, at the expiration of that time, there was no health left in me.” I was sent to *grass* among the luxuriant pasturages of the west of England, to recruit my strength, and pick up my looks again. An unexpected and unprepared for summons arrived during that time, to recal Mr RIDDELI to his property in the West Indies again. His departure was

to be immediate, and his absence short. His affairs in this part of the world required one of us to stay behind and superintend them, so I was not permitted to accompany him ; and, as we are obliged to do on more occasions than one in this life, I was compelled to sacrifice *le doux pour le necessaire*.

WHEN he left me, I went into Dorsetshire with my mother and sisters, with the intention of paying them a short visit, and returning as soon as possible to Scotland, where I left my two children as hostages ; but a rapid series of domestic troubles, of the most painful nature, and which I felt too sensibly for my health, by impairing it even in a most alarming degree for my friends, totally incapacitated me for undertaking for some time longer so fatiguing a journey by myself. Mr RIDDELL's absence, the dangers to which his voyage, at that season, and in these turbulent times, exposed him, the situation of my youngest child, who was dangerously ill, and of whom every post brought me the most alarming intelligence ; the loss of my father, and several other sources of domestic anxiety, laid open at that period to me scenes of distress in human life which we are all equally exposed to, but which I never expe-

rienced before, for which I was totally unprepared, and to which I feel I am scarcely yet resigned. Since I reached Woodley Park, a quiet regular way of life, moderate exercise, the change of air, and variety of scene, and, above all, the resuming my old studies and occupations, have wrought a considerable amendment in my constitution. My health is daily improving, and my spirits are by starts as airy as ever.

THE seclusion I experienced in England from the farm, my library, and all the objects that had been accustomed to engross my attention, and to which all my ideas were responsive, left a vacuity in my mind which completely disarmed it from resisting any impressions of real or fantastic sorrow. But now that I am returned to my old haunts, it is again supplied with objects to engage its active powers, and the springs of pleasure and harmony have once more resumed their elasticity. I shall write you more fully in my next, as to the nature of my present pursuits, and how I found BURNS and the other friends here you left behind, for they were not few I assure you; and I desire that you will not attribute the large share I have appro-

priated to myself in this one, to any particular partiality or indulgence for the object in question, but solely to the laudable maxim of doing as I would be done by, and encouraging you to write me very circumstantially about your own actions and thoughts, and especially your writings. I cannot but be interested in the progress of the *second* part of a work, when I set so high a degree of value and esteem upon the *first*, and whose author claims so large a portion of my friendship and good wishes.

You will not thank me, perhaps, if I close this letter without inserting a few lines about your friend \*\*\*\*\*. Were I to give you a narrative of all that volatile genius of his has undertaken, and in some measure compassed, in spite of all the bars and obstacles his evil genius had vainly raised against his plans, you would think I had launched into the regions of romance and knight-errantry : so I leave them for him to entertain you with some day over a bottle of claret, whose exhilarating influence may inspire you with some taste and toleration for such exploits. I shall only inform you, therefore, that his last letters mention his recovery from that dreadful fever, whose effects were felt so severely through-

out the West Indies. It has proved nearly as fatal, for the time at least, as the democratic spirit of equality which is spreading like wild-fire amongst the colonies, and occasioning the most terrible depredations. Our ancestors, when they instituted the accursed traffic of the slave trade, brought over a nation, who, though long patient and submissive to servitude, seem now to have nearly touched, by the decree of Providence, the term of their bondage, and have already begun to retaliate the injuries imposed upon them by their persecuting masters. The negroes of St Domingo, as you have probably seen by the papers, have massacred, in a general insurrection, 12,000 of the French whites; and the rest having escaped to America, the former remain in the undisputed possession and sovereignty of the island, wherein they had so long mourned their captivity. But we must deplore, however zealous in the cause of liberty and justice, that the laws of humanity should thus be violated, before the rights of half mankind can be firmly established, which I fear they will not be yet without the effusion of more blood. Would to heaven this dreadful example of

reprisals might expiate the guilt of the infatuated Europeans, whose avarice and rapine first dragged them reluctant from their native soil, and deprived them at once of their country, their families, and their freedom, to gratify their own superfluous luxuries : “ *Car c'est a ce prix qu'on vend le sucre en Europe.*”—*Vide VOLTAIRES CANDIDE.*

**FAREWELL!** You will execrate the length of this scroll : but I have nothing to do but to indite long letters at present, and inspire my correspondents with as much *ennui* as I experience just now myself. This whole week is consecrated, by the regulations of your unpitying elders and synods, to fasting, and migrating twice a-day to church, with cold noses and sour countenances.

I MEANT to have wrote you by the FERGUSONS ; but they never acquainted me with their departure. Poor Craigdarrochs warm and feeling heart has sustained a sensible affliction lately in the loss of his wife ; but he has a source of happiness and comfort few parents can boast of in his eldest son, who seems every thing that is amiable and accomplished. Indeed they are both the

most promising lads I see any where. Apropos! if you will remember to tell ROBERT FERGUSSON to be kind enough to send me MIRABEAUS Letters, I shall hold myself much indebted to you: I think that was the book he promised me, and which I will carefully return to him by the fly. Once more adieu! and believe me truly yours,

MARIA RIDDELL.

No. CXCIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mrs MARIA RIDDELL.

*Edinburgh, March 27. 1793.*

MY DEAR MADAM,

NATURE gives no wound for which she does not afford a balsamic plaster. My health and spirits had been but poorly for some months past. I no sooner received your medicinal epistle than my spirits rose, my stomach resumed its lost tone, and now I am as hearty as a cricket.

Poor Girl! for though a mother your youth justifies the term, your apprehensions

concerning your worthy lord and master were truly alarming. But, according to my text, now that these apprehensions are removed, you are much more happy than if they had never existed. That you are a *vegetable*, as you say, I allow. But that you belong to the *cryptogamia* class, I deny. \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

DROPPING all *figures*, I now come to real *substance*. BOB FERGUSSON tells me that he left **MIRABEAUS Letters** in London ; but the moment he can get them down, they shall be sent to Woodley Park,

WITH regard to *writing*, I have not been entirely idle. Of the second volume of the *Philosophy of Natural History* I have a thousand pages ready for the press ; three or four hundred more are necessary to complete my plan. But the labour of perusing such a multitude of ancient and modern authors is so immense, that I know not when I shall have done. With best wishes to all my friends in your corner of the land of cakes, I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CXCIV.

Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM  
SMELLIE.

*Woodley Park, 12 Jan. 1793.*

DEAR, SIR,

I AM very glad to have an opportunity of getting this letter franked for you, as I would not for the world you should languish under the apprehensions of the precious specimens of rhetoric and eloquence, which you favoured me with last month, not having come safely to your highly honoured correspondents hands. I am extremely gratified to find my letter occasioned so favourable a revolution in your fabric; but very sorry to find a gentleman of your wit and understanding has read LINNAEUSES immortal works for no better purpose than that of making *bad puns* upon them, and communicating those elegant specimens of your ingenuity to me,

who am his most professed admirer. However, thank heavens! your raillery will not be more prejudicial to him than the more serious dissertations by which you have striven to controvert his systems; for, however well grounded the alarms of his disciples must be, at seeing their master in the hands of so able and subtile an adversary, they have very little to fear from the experimental demonstration of a philosopher who, for the most part, has confined his researches to botanizing in bough-pots and balconies, out of a five-storied window, perhaps, in the smokey city of Edinburgh. So much for what you are pleased to denominate the figurative part of your epistle. I am glad you pursue your intended publication so assiduously. I long much to see it; as I am certain, if it is equal to what you have already given to the world in that way, it will do you great honour; for, all pleasantry apart, I do admire you as an author you know very highly; and should esteem your last work invaluable were it not for that unlucky attack on LINNAEUS, with whom, you also know, it is to me a sacrilege to differ: so pray, spare him in the next volume,

YOUR last letter was sown so thick with flowers and figures of speech, that you left no room for news or information either public or private; whether Edinburgh has produced any new literary publications since I was in it; or if the botanic garden can boast any additional acquisitions in the vegetable way. You certainly had the attention to answer my commission regarding ROBERT FERGUSSON, who, according to your classification, must certainly be a thriving plant of some sort, though you do not specify his genus or species so methodically as you have done mine. You likewise omit making known to me under what order I am to look for *you* in the botanical dictionary; I am inclined to insert you, in the appendix to mine, as a *non-descript*.

I AM still very closely employed, both within doors and without, at Woodley Park. My girls, too, take up some hours of the day, which, indeed, cannot be more properly or pleasantly devoted. The little creature, whom you remember seeing both here and in Edinburgh, is grown quite a companion to me. I began three weeks ago to teach her, after one of my own methods, and you know they are all eccentric,

to read ; and I think she does me some credit, as she already knows both alphabets in all their various characters, and begins to spell words of one syllable. Indeed, her aptness and docility more than compensate for all the pains I bestow upon her. Her chief bent, however, is music, which I encourage as much as possible. You would not know her, I think, she has now become so stout and tall. SOPHIA, they tell me, is to be the beauty of the family ; for which, indeed, she promises fair, if the small-pox does not disfigure her pretty dimpled face. She is a great entertainment to me at present, as well as her sister, for she begins to walk and speak, and is the most sprightly animated little mortal you ever saw.

My lord and master does not talk of returning till after the equinox is past ; so that I have no chance of seeing your metropolis this winter. He is, however, *Dieu merci !* entirely recovered. I wish I could be converted to your text, as you call it, of thinking evils only the harbingers of future blessings ; or, in other words, that it is better to undergo occasional vexations and cares than to glide along the smooth unruffled tide of pleasure and content. The nerves, too rudely jarred by the

emotions of pain, are too much slackened to be again quickly responsive to the gentlest touch of returning joy or unexpected pleasure. I know many philosophers, however, have reasoned like you ; but I confess *optimism*, individually considered, is not one of my favourite systems ; nor can I altogether allow with the Doctor PANGLOSS, that this is exactly “ the best of all possible worlds.” I sincerely wish, notwithstanding my doubts upon the subject, that you may ever find it so. I find all its “ uses so weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,” that I should be ill satisfied of the perfect justice of its Creator, were I not imprest with the firmest belief of its being only “ the bud of being,” and the preparatory state of existence which daily gravitates towards a better. So you see my partial scepticism leads to a general faith, as firm and unshaken as the most contrary of your doctrines can. But I find I am moralizing, which you may think rather a dull species of epistolary entertainment : so I shall cut it short by concluding the whole, and assuring you that I ever am, &c.

MARIA RIDDELL.

## No. CXCV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mrs MARIA  
RIDDELL.

*Edinburgh, March 3. 1794.*

DEAR MADAM,

I THINK I am still alive; but that, for aught I know, may be a deception. However, what I have sent you will convince you that I existed for some years past \*.

My friend and your husband, whom I hope you will soon have the pleasure of seeing, has already subscribed liberally for my *second volume*; so that I have nothing to urge on that head. Your little ones, I shall be happy to learn, continue to afford you the highest gratification.

How do the sports and productions of nature go on in your corner? Do they still

\* The Prospectus of his second volume of the Philosophy of Natural History.

proceed in multiplying and replenishing the earth ?

You cannot be idle, nor neglect your studies. Have you read a poem entitled, *The Loves of the Plants* ? I forget the author, but it will amuse you. My brain is at present in a very dull state ; and, therefore, I cut and run. I shall, however, if you excite me by a lively response, of which you are perfectly capable, embrace a more favourable opportunity for the effusion of fancy and nonsense. I always am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CXCVI.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mrs RIDDELL.

DEAR MADAM, Edin. May 3. 1794.

I NEVER had the misfortune to receive an unpleasant letter from you but your last. *Glenriddells death* ! I cannot bear the idea ! What a loss to his country and friends ! But

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the condition of his amiable wife!—This subject, with tears in my eyes, I must drop.

Now, Madam, the chief value of philosophy, or a knowledge of ourselves, and of the general system and operations of nature, is to teach such beings as we are to act our parts with propriety, to sail down the current of life with innocence and philanthropy, and to submit to our fate with all possible resignation and cheerfulness.

With regard to the pamphlets which a fortnight ago you were so anxious to obtain, and I was no less anxious to procure for you, not one of them is to be had at present in Edinburgh.

I DARE hardly venture on the latter part of your kind epistle,—*O'er the hills and far awa'*! without the smallest hint concerning the intention of flying to the moon to get quit of your friends, is to me an inexplicable enigma which, in your next, I hope you will explain. I, however, rejoice to see that you maintain a dignified firmness of mind, which does honour to your natural good sense as well as to your acquired knowledge.

IF I had been younger, what pleasure I should have received in travelling with you among the vineyards of the land, and in botanizing on the Alps under the direction of the ingenious and learned HALLER!

WHAT! of your husband not one word! This, I hope, is an oversight, and that he is now happy with you in Woodley Park. Your lovely children, I perceive, are in health, otherwise you would have mentioned the contrary.

WHEN you go to the continent, beside your common researches concerning plants and animals, I hope you will not neglect proper observations on that strangest of all animals, *Man*.

Two years absence is dreadful ; but I rejoice in the hopes of communicating with you at the distance of many thousand miles. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Bb 2

## No. CXCVII.

*Mrs M. RIDDELL to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

DEAR SIR, *Tinwald House, Feb. 9. 1795.*

IF your faculties are not wholly torpid and congealed in this frost, pray let me know how you are, and what you are about. If you fancy me botanizing on the Alps with HALLER, you are, like many of your tribe denominated Philosophers, very much mistaken. I am still an inhabitant of the *land of cakes*; and so much is this land to my satisfaction, that I have no thoughts of abandoning it for some time. Indeed, I would not care if the last trumpet were to sound in my ears while I was nibbling oatmeal, and planting cabbages on the banks of the Nith. I was frustrated in my plan of travelling by the rapid success of the French arms.

By a letter I had lately from my friend NEWTON, who is at Florence, he informs me that peace is likely soon to be restored to the Continent. You know NEWTON, and will be happy to hear he is safe and well. I passed

some time in England last year, after I took my leave of you. I lived in London with a very pleasant set of *sans culottes*. FERGUSSON the younger is doing very well there. He introduced me to your friend little BOLTY, who fell, I am told, desparately in love with me, though fifty-six and a Dutch-man ! and with whom I was quite charmed. I never met with that species of animal called a Traveller, who united more modesty with better information. Indeed I never took so great an interest in any person that I know of, on so short an acquaintance. He is going now to Paris. I had hoped he would have returned to Scotland again, and wrote to press that plan to him. Among sundry originals I picked up acquaintance with was BOSWELL the biographer ; and a stranger biped, yourself always excepted, I know no where. Did you ever see him ?

I am here again, after all my wanderings : Not at Woodley Park ; that is parted from, and I will not tell you with what regret on my part : Not at Friars-carse ; for your friend, and our gude cousin has fairly parried all our endeavours to \*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

however, *chacun pour soi*, it is thought he

will find his account in it ; but at a crazy, rambling, worm-eaten, cob-web-hunting, chateau of the Duke of Queensberry, which, God be thanked, I abandon and evacuate with all my house-hold next May ; for such a *Hyper-naculum* never poor sinner was immured in. There are sufficient loop holes in the walls to save window tax, and they are sponges, excellent sponges for imbibing moisture. After a fall of snow or a shower of rain, one might set a moderate sized lugger afloat in the bed chamber ; and I have some thoughts of erecting a steam-engine in the parlour to pump out the water, as there is always smoke enough there to set it a-going. Mr R. is in London ; and I, as usual, am left *tête à tête* with myself : No hardship, however, as time never hangs heavy with me. My harp, my piano, my books, my museum, above all, my children ; these are sufficient to occupy my mind and body too. I have just finished a most admirable philosophic production, GODWINS Political Justice. Have you read it ?

WHAT, in the name of APOLLO, are you doing with your book ? Is it ever to appear or not ? You advised me to write you, had I gone abroad, my observations on that strange

creature, Man, rather than those on plants and minerals. I need not go abroad for observations of that nature, as I find ample scope for them here, and am disgusted with the perspective. There is but one animal I think more inconsistent, more fickle, less to be trusted, and with a lesser remaining impress of the Creators stamp about it, than Man—I mean Woman. Observe, however, that I venerate human nature, and think unfavourably of man only as ill-organized civil societies, and profligate\*\*\*\*\* and false religions, have degenerated him. Study \*\*\*\*\* immortal work, and there you will find impressed the sacred lineaments of truth, happiness, and virtue; without foil, without ornament, without decoration; but in all their simplicity and irresistible force of conviction.

How progresses the literary world in your quarter? Have you any good periodical publications going forward? I would send some poetry, *de tems en tems*, to any that are above the mediocre. As for myself, I am wholly given up to the education of my two girls; and their rapid progress surpasses my expectations. My pen is now confined to what may be useful to them. I have no

time for *my* studies and pursuits, except when they are sleeping. From eight in the evening till between two and three in the morning, I devote to my own studies. The girls have no attendant, no instructress but myself; so you may suppose, unless I snatch a portion “from revels or from rest” for my own researches, I must abandon them altogether. Farewell! *portez vous bien.* and believe me your sincere friend,

MARIA RIDDELL.

No. CXCVIII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mrs MARIA RIDDELL.*

DEAR MADAM,

*Edin. 19. Feb. 1795.*

How you could have possibly devined that my faculties were become torpid and congealed in this abominable frost, I know not. But, from an angel, I must suppose you to be metamorphosed into a sorceress. For these three weeks past my family have been in a dreadful situation. *Five* sons and two daughters at once down in *sore throats.* One of my sons, who was aged between 19 and 20,

a good and a useful young man, who from his cradle never vexed me till he expired in five or six days illness. The rest, I think, are in a state of convalescence.

Excuse my present brevity ; but remember that I expect, with your first convenience, another *cheerer* ; and I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

N. B. WHEN you see Captain RIDDELL, tell him I always wish him well,

### No. CXCIX.

*Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr ALEX. SMELLIE.*

SIR,

*Halleaths, 17th July 1795.*

THOUGH personally a stranger, I take the liberty of addressing you. Having had the honour of being known to your father, and of enjoying his friendship and correspondence for several years past, perhaps my name may not be altogether unknown to you. The subject upon which I beg leave to trespass a

few minutes on your time, is the second volume of the Philosophy of Natural History, which your father wrote me, not long since, was in a state of forwardness. Might I request you to inform me if that work was compleated, and if that, or any other manuscripts of your late fathers are now to be given to the public? I am solicitous to obtain information on this subject, not only from the principle of anxiety, lest my much esteemed friends unexpected removal, so much to be lamented on every account, should have robbed the world of any production from his admirable pen; but also from a desire to learn *any* circumstances relative to his surviving family. I beg you, Sir, to be assured that my interest in every thing that was dear to my late worthy friend has not expired with himself; and I shall be happy if ever I can in any shape, or in the slightest manner, be serviceable to any of his connexions; and they would confer an obligation on me at any time by putting it in my power.

I HAVE only one more favour to ask, and that is, if *no* posthumous works of Mr SMELLIE are to be made public, and the request is not unpleasant, that I may be entrusted with

the perusal of the *second* volume of the Philosophy of Natural History in the manuscript. Mr. SMELLIE had promised me this when he was at Woodley Park: But if it is in the least inconvenient or disagreeable to you, I drop it without reluctance. I have the honour to be, &c.

MARIA RIDDELL.

No. CC.

Mrs MARIA RIDDELL to Mr ALEXANDER  
SMELLIE.

DEAR SIR,                    *Halleaths, 13 Sept. 1795.*

I ASSURE you it was from no motives of negligence on my part, that your very obliging letter has remained thus long unanswered. I am much concerned and surprised to find, that the second volume of the Philosophy of Natural History is not to be published on your own account. \*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\* Though quite ignorant myself of these matters, I hope you are better informed, and have good friends to advise with. I would certainly take the liberty of recommending to you to consult some intelligent persons as to that circumstance in particular ; for a work likely to prove so lucrative to the editors as that I speak of, ought not to be lost by the rightful possessors, if it is practicable to secure it. Your father intended publishing it by subscription ; and that would undoubtedly be the most profitable scheme. Nothing, I believe, would make me more happy than to learn the possession of that excellent work is recovered to you ; and I again beg to assure you, Sir, that where my little interest, or any thing within my command, can be of the smallest service to you, I shall be happy to shew you that my offers are not merely complimentary.

I HOPE the publication of Mr SMELLIES posthumous works may be of some use to you ; for even imperfect fragments, from the pen of a favourite author, are greedily sought for when he is no more. Those biographical sketches you speak of, and his letters, the choicest of them at least, with any other

little manuscripts you may find calculated to engage the public attention, will probably form a volume or two, which may go off as successfully, if not more so, than a more philosophical work. I need not suggest to you that these kind of things, though they need not be hastily and uncarefully published, lose half their *vogue* if kept back too long. When a celebrated author or character is suddenly lost to our future expectations, we eagerly enquire after, and grasp at, every little incident that relates to him, or for every MS. that once was his: but it so happens, that our curiosity and solicitude vanish when the object has been long removed; and we often regard as spurious those posthumous writings that linger very long after the writer has ceased to exist.

I DARE say you will pardon my thus using the freedom to give an opinion, which proceeds from the regard I can never cease to entertain for the son of an old and much regretted friend. As to those letters of mine, late in your fathers possession, you shall be welcome to them, so as you return them for me to look over, in case of errors from hasty

writing. I have all your fathers correspondence to me, which you may likewise command if you are so desirous. I heard of you lately from my friend the Dean of Faculty, who knew your father well.

I EXPECT in a few months, perhaps sooner, to visit Edinburgh, when I shall not fail to see you. Have you any concern in the publication of the literary Magazine in Edinburgh? I should like to send some MS. poetry in my disposal at present to that or any other good periodical publication; and of such I dare say you can afford me as good intelligence as any one. Let me know likewise if books for very young children, such as Mrs BARBAULDS for example, are likely to sell at all in Edinburgh, or would be of any use. I have a MS. or two, written to amuse my own children, of three and four years of age only, who read perfectly. If these would defray their own expences of printing, I could perhaps send them to you. You will know what the expence of printing two small volumes may come to, the size of Mrs BARBAULDS *Lessons for Children*.

TELL Mr HILL, if he has got the Memoirs of the Citoyenne ROLAND in French to send them to me. I remain, &c.

MARIA RIDDELL.

FROM the foregoing correspondence, it appears that Mr SMELLIE visited Mrs RIDDELL at Woodley Park in Dumfries-shire, sometime between the 10th September and 16th October 1792. At this period, perhaps, he became acquainted with Mr CRAIK of Arbigland, a very aged and most respectable country gentleman, much noted as one of the earliest agricultural improvers in Scotland, and said to have been among the first who cultivated drilled turnips in the field so early as 1745, one of the greatest improvements in modern husbandry. In 1793, this gentleman was prevailed upon to sit for his picture, but was too aged to be able to undergo the fatigues of a long journey to Edinburgh; and Mr GEORGE WATSON, an eminent portrait painter in Edinburgh, the son-in-law of Mr SMELLIE, was engaged to go out to Dumfries-shire for that purpose. On this occasion, Mr SMELLIE introduced Mr WATSON to the ac-

quaintance of Mr CRAIK by the following letter :

No. CCI.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr CRAIK of  
*Arbigland.*

*Edin. 13 July 1793.*

MY DEAR AND REVERED SIR,

THE bearer, GEORGE WATSON, is my son-in-law; and you know that *painters, poets, and fiddlers* are generally *blackguards*. However, such as he is, I send him to you to make a map of your reverend and respectable countenance; and I have no doubt but he will give satisfaction in this business to you and your friends.

I HOPE all your vegetable children continue in their usual health and vigour. Adieu, but may it still be far distant.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

Mr SMELLIE, in conjunction with the late eminent bookseller in Edinburgh, Mr JOHN

BALFOUR, were appointed printers to the University of Edinburgh in the year 1765, and had enjoyed what honour and emoluments were derivable from that office undisturbed for about thirty years; when certain persons bestirred themselves to procure that appointment in their own favour from the Magistrates of Edinburgh, who are the patrons of the University, and endeavoured likewise to secure the influence of the Professors in aid of their pretensions. We do not possess any farther information on this subject than is contained in the few subsequent letters, which, of course, are all on one side: But it is obvious that the movers in this must have taken advantage of the almost entire retirement from business of Mr JOHN BALFOUR, and the evident declining health of Mr SMELLIE, to endeavour rather prematurely to secure to themselves the emoluments of that office. In this entirely uninstructed predicament, we leave the following letters on the subject to speak for themselves. It is only necessary to mention that Mr ELDER, to whom the first of these letters is addressed, was then deputy post-master general for Scot-

land, and had for several years conducted, or regulated, the political measures of the city of Edinburgh, with much suavity and propriety, for the ruling party of Lord Viscount MELVILLE; and was, therefore, very properly supposed by Mr SMELLIE to retain some degree of influence or control on the matters connected with the patronage of the Magistracy. Besides this important circumstance, the Principal of the University, then was, and now is the Reverend Dr BAIRD, son-in-law to Mr ELDER. The second letter, in the following series, appears to have been a circular, and addressed to every person who was supposed to possess any influence on the occasion. Mr JOHN DAVIDSON, to whom one of these letters is addressed, was an eminent writer or attorney in Edinburgh of more than ordinary influence; Mr JOHN DUNDAS, a gentleman of the same profession, was one of the city clerks, and therefore supposed to possess some degree of influence in the Town Council; and was, besides, a very intimate acquaintance of Mr SMELLIE.

## No. CCH.

MR WILLIAM SMELLIE to THOMAS ELDER,  
*Esq.*

DEAR SIR,                    *Edinburgh, Jan. 10. 1795.*

MR JO. BALFOUR and I have been printers to the University of Edinburgh since the year 1765. I now learn that several persons who never *smelt the dust* of a college, are applying to receive that honour; and to deprive us, without any fault whatever, of an office the emoluments of which we have so long enjoyed.

I MENTION these circumstances to you, as a brother *Crochallan*, in hopes of your interest with the Principal to check such \*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\* I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CCIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Sir JAMES STIRLING,  
*Lord Provost of Edinburgh.*

MY LORD, *Edin. Jan. 12. 1795.*

I HAVE in a few words to inform you of a fact, and, at the same time, to solicit a favour.

Mr JOHN BALFOUR and I, since the year 1765, have been printers to the University. Before and after that period, I attended all the Medical Classes, as Anatomy, Chemistry, the Practice of Physic, Botany, &c. which gave me a range of that species of knowledge, which few men of my profession ever had ; and I never so much as dreamed that any person would have the *effrontery* to apply to the University, as long as we lived, for that honourable office. *But such things are !* Several printers are now applying, without the smallest pretensions to superior merit, to supplant us both ; for I know personally hardly any of them understand Latin, and

none of them one atom of medicine or the sciences upon which it depends.

I therefore beg your attention to this business ; and ever am, with esteem and respect,  
&c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CCIV.

*Circular to the Professors of the University.*

DEAR SIR, Edin. Jan. 13. 1795.

I THIS moment learn that a number of persons are applying to be made printers to the University, most of whom never attended any University whatever. Since the 1765, when Mr JOHN BALFOUR and I joined in a printing copartnery, all the public affairs of the University were printed in our office ; and, from personal friendship, and perhaps some other motives, most of its learned and ingenious Professors employed us to print their private productions.

C c 3

I SUBMIT it to you, Sir, whether it would not be indecent, without any urgent cause, to appoint other printers to the University so long as we are able to perform our duty. It is to me astonishing, that any honest or honourable mind could have the effrontery to make such an attempt at the risk of making the University liable to the imputation of vacillancy, or, at least, inattention. The late Dr GREGORY, whose character as a gentleman and a scholar, is well known, first announced to me that Mr BALFOUR and I were appointed by the University to print all their public affairs. I thanked the worthy Doctor : But he was pleased to reply, “Don’t thank me ; for, if we knew any other printer who was better qualified to execute the business of the University, you would not have been employed.” I beg pardon for this intrusion ; and am, with respect and esteem, your, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CCV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to JOHN DAVIDSON,  
*Esq. Writer to the Signet.*

DEAR SIR,            *Edinburgh, 14 Jan. 1795.*

IT is now nearly thirty years since Mr JOHN BALFOUR and I had the honour of being printers to the University of Edinburgh. At present an attempt is making to wrest that honour from us, by several people, *few* of whom know *one word* of *Latin*, and not one of them one syllable of medicine, or the different *sciences* which are necessary to acquire that species of knowledge. I am sorry to trouble a gentleman from whom I have received so many marks of real friendship. But as this attempt, if successful, will injure my *business* materially, I have presumed to apply for your interest as agent for the city. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

C c 4

*N. B.* Many years ago, I attended all the Medical Classes, whose Professors, with so much success, teach a numerous train of students from almost every quarter of the globe.

## CCVI.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to JOHN BALFOUR, *Esq.*

DEAR SIR, Edinburgh, 15 Jan. 1795.

I THINK it my duty to inform you of a circumstance which I never imagined could possibly exist. A considerable number of printers and booksellers most of whom know not the Latin language, and none of them one syllable of medicine, or the sciences preparatory to that study, are applying to the Magistrates, and to the Professors, to be made printers to the University. Now, Sir, you know better than any man the history of that business, and I shall conceal nothing from you. I only heard of these applications within these two days. Without delay, I wrote to the members of the University as well as to the Magistrates on this subject. I

shall not pretend to dictate, but I leave your conduct in this affair to your own discretion ; and am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CCVII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Mr JOHN DUNDAS.*

DEAR SIR,            *Edinburgh, 20 Jan. 1795.*

A NUMBER of *Nigers* are just now applying to be made printers to the University, most of whom know not one *word* of Latin, and not a *syllable* of these branches of science which are preparatory to the acquisition of the medical art : Yet such men have petitioned the Magistrates of this city for a monopoly or exclusive privilege of printing the classical books to be used in our public schools and colleges !

MR JOHN BALFOUR and I, ever since the year 1765, have printed all the Medical Theses. But those gentlemen wish to de-

prive us of an honour the offices annexed to which they are totally unqualified to perform.

Now, may I beg your influence with the Honourable the Magistrates and Town-Council to check this rash and deleterious attempt? This letter you may shew to your colleague **MR JOHN GRAY**, who is both your friend and my friend. I always am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

AFTER completing the manuscript of the second volume of his *Philosophy of Natural History*, **MR SMELLIE** proposed to have undertaken the composition of a series of biographical *Memoirs* of the lives and writings of such authors as had employed him to print their works. In a former part of these *Memoirs*, we have already had occasion to mention the composition of a short life of his illustrious friend, **LORD KAMES**, for insertion in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; and this *Memoir* **MR SMELLIE** intended to have extended considerably, with the addition of analytical sketches of the various and numerous works of that excellent person. This tribute to the

memory of his departed friend and patron was never accomplished ; but the pleasing task, as has been already mentioned, has been ably executed by the Honourable ALEXANDER FRAZER TYTLER, Lord Woodhouselee of the Court of Session. Among the letters which relate to this last literary effort of Mr SMELLIE, and which we have deemed worthy of insertion in these Memoirs, one will be found from Mr SMELLIE to the late Lord GARDENSTONE, in which he gives an account of the particular occasion which induced him to write the life of Lord KAMES for the Encyclopaedia. It would appear that Mr SMELLIE had submitted the manuscript of that life to the critical inspection of the late worthy and celebrated Dr BLAIR ; and from whom Mr SMELLIE received the following friendly criticisms, which are here inserted as a literary curiosity, and are copied from an autograph of that eminent divine.

*Critical Observations on Mr SMELLIES Life of Lord KAMES, by the Rev. HUGH BLAIR, D. D.*

WHAT is said at p. 8. and 9, of the *dust* which was raised by Lord KAMESES Essays on

the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion, is written with too much asperity; and, for various reasons, ought to be altered. I think the whole passage ought to stand thus.—After the words, p. 8. l. 4. “excited general attention,” go on thus;—and gave rise to no small controversy. As, with the boldness of original genius, he had departed in a few particulars from commonly received opinions, some persons, whose zeal exceeded their knowledge, were inclined to accuse him of irreligious notions. The Essay upon *Liberty and Necessity* chiefly gave occasion to the attack, though it was clearly shown, in some writings published at that time, that the authors doctrine coincided in the main with the doctrine of the famous CALVIN, whose tenets are generally considered as the standard of orthodoxy in Scotland. One clergyman of the name of ANDERSON, a man of warm and violent temper, wrote a whole volume against these *Essays*, in which he treats the learned author, who was then a Senator of the College of Justice, with an unbecoming degree of rudeness and asperity. Not content with this, he afterwards brought a formal charge of heresy against him before the Presbytery of Edinburgh. But that

court, after impartially considering the matter, repelled the charge, which was finally dismissed, and never more heard of. This injurious attack, however, proved the occasion of his Lordship giving a remarkable proof of candour and liberality of thought. As his Essays on Morality and Natural Religion went through several editions, in these which were subsequent to the controversy they had occasioned, Lord KAMES, unwilling to create uneasiness to any well-intentioned persons on the subject of morality, retracted some opinions which had given offence, and acknowledged his having changed his sentiments on that head. How few philosophers are capable of this greatness and generosity of mind ! In the department of Belles Lettres, &c."

WHAT is said at p. 18, " of the *Physical and Literary Society* having received a charter from the crown, and being afterwards denominated the *Royal Society of Edinburgh*," is very incorrect, and must be altered, as it would give offence. The Royal Society was altogether a new institution, upon a larger and more extended plan. What should therefore be said, according to the *true* matter of

fact, is “ This Society was afterwards incorporated into the Royal Society of Edinburgh, which received a charter from the Crown, and which is daily producing marks, &c.”

At p. 19, towards the foot, after these words, “ and his Lordship of the men,” I would incline to add the following: “ From what has been above said of the various productions of his genius, it must clearly appear to the reader, that there could have been few or no idle moments in his life. In fact, he could scarcely be said to know what idleness was. His mind was incessantly at work ; either teeming with some new ideas, or employed in the active and laborious investigations of some truths which were the objects of his pursuit. At the same time, with all his uncommon ardency of spirit, one great feature in the character of Lord KAMES, &c.”

At p. 20. after these words ;—“ intentions to benefit his fellow creatures,” I should think it proper to add the following: “ In his temper he was naturally warm, though kindly and affectionate. In the friendship he formed, he was ardent, zealous, and sin-

cere. He was so far from being inclined to irreligion, as some zealots would have insinuated, that very few men possessed a more devout habit of thought. A constant sense of Deity, and veneration for Providence, dwelt upon his mind: and hence that propensity which appears in all his writings, and which by some he was thought to carry too far, towards searching every where for final causes, and tracing the wisdom of the Supreme Author of Nature. But here we must stop, &c."

WITH these few corrections and additions, I approve entirely of the rest of the account that is here given of Lord KAMES.

H. BLAIR.

AT the time of his death, besides the life of Lord KAMES, Mr SMELLIE had composed three other biographical Memoirs. The life of the late amiable and learned Dr JOHN GREGORY, Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, author of two well known and excellent works, *The Duties of a Physician*, and *a Legacy to his Daughters*: The life of DAVID HUME, the celebrated

historian and philosopher: and the life of **ADAM SMITH**, L. L. D. the illustrious author of the *Wealth of Nations*. He had also began a Life of the late Dr **ALEXANDER MONRO**. In the year 1800, five years after Mr **SMELLIES** death, his son published these three lives, which his father had left in manuscript, together with the before-mentioned life of **LORD KAMES**, in one octavo volume, under the title of *Characteristic Lives, &c.*; to which were subjoined, in order to complete the volume, four of Mr **SMELLIES** juvenile essays, which had never been before published.

**BESIDES** these lives, which are contained in the posthumous volume published by his son in 1800, we have been informed on most unquestionable authority, that Mr **SMELLIE** intended to have composed a considerable number of other lives, and that he proposed to have published them under an alphabetical arrangement, as a commencement towards a *Biographica Scotica*, but confining his attention to those learned Scots men with whom he had been on terms of intimacy, or whose works had been printed by him. Of these, there still remains an imperfect enumera-

tion, which was printed by his son in the dedication to the posthumous volume above alluded to, and which is here subjoined, with the addition of some short notices of the persons whose lives Mr SMELLIE intended to have commemorated.

“ My Fathers design, had he lived to execute it, was to have written Literary and Characteristical Accounts of Scottish Authors with whom he was personally acquainted, and to have published them after the manner of Biographical Dictionaries, in an Alphabetical Arrangement.—Among these were\* :

**ARNOT, HUGO**, Esq. advocate: Author of the History of Edinburgh, and of a volume of selected Criminal Trials.

**ALSTON, DR ANDREW**: Formerly professor of Botany and Materia Medica in the University of Edinburgh.

**BLAIR, THE REV. DR HUGH**: One of the Ministers of Edinburgh, Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the University; author of five volumes of universally admired Sermons, and of Lectures on Rhetoric.

\* *Literary and Characteristical Lives*, p. iv.

**BEATTIE, Dr JAMES**: Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen; author of a beautiful poem intitled the Minstrel, or the Progress of Genius, and of a much admired Essay on Truth, in defence of the Doctrines of Christianity.

**BLACK, Dr JOSEPH**: The late illustrious Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, whose discovery of the facts which constitute the difference between *mild* and *caustic* alkalies and earths, laid the firm foundation of the whole vast superstructure of modern Chemical Philosophy.

**BLACKLOCK, The Rev. Dr THOMAS**: A most ingenious, learned, amiable, and pious blind Philosopher, Poet, and Divine, of whom some biographical notices have been already given in these Memoirs.

**BURNETT, The Honourable JAMES, Lord Monboddo of the Court of Session**: An eminent Lawyer, excellent Judge, profound Scholar, and amiable Man; author of a Theory of the Origin and Progress of Language, and a System of Ancient Metaphysics.

**CAMPBELL, Dr GEORGE**, Principal of Marischal College, Aberdeen: Author of a much esteemed Essay in Defence of the Authen-

ticity of the Miracles recorded in the Holy Scriptures.

**CULLEN, Dr WILLIAM:** Successively Professor of Chemistry, *Materia Medica*, and of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh ; long a greatly employed and much esteemed physician in Edinburgh, and highly popular professor in its University ; author of *First Lines of the Practice of Physic*, a *Synopsis of Nosology*, and other works.

**DALRYMPLE, The Honourable Sir DAVID, Lord Hailes :** A profound Lawyer, excellent Judge, and illustrious Historian ; author of the hitherto unrivalled *Annals of Scotland*, and of many other works.

**ELIBANK, The Right Honourable Lord :** A nobleman of singular and solid attainments in literature, and much suavity of manners.

**ERSKINE, JOHN, Esq. of Cardross :** Professor of Scots Law in the University of Edinburgh, and author of *Institutes of the Law of Scotland*, which still remains the standard book on that important subject.

**FERGUSSON, Dr ADAM :** Formerly Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, and one of the Commissioners appointed to endeavour to promote a recon-

ciliation with the revolted colonies of North America; author of a much admired Essay on Civil Society, and an excellent history of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic, who still lives in very advanced age in possession of all his faculties.

**GARDEN**, the Honourable **FRANCIS**, of Gardenstone and Troup: A Senator of the College of Justice, by the title of Lord **GARDENSTONE**, Author of Travelling Memorandums, of whom some mention has been already made in these Memoirs.

**GARDINER**, Dr **John**: A most respectable physician in Edinburgh, and of very amiable manners, already mentioned in this work; Author of the *Animal Economy*, &c.

\* **GREGORY**, Dr **JOHN**, joint professor with Dr **WILLIAM CULLEN** of the Theory and Practice of Physic in the University of Edinburgh, which two classes they taught alternately; author of a Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with those of the Animal World, of the Duties and Qualifications of a Physician, Elements of the Practice of Physic, and of a Father's Legacy to his Daughters.

\* **HOME DRUMMOND**, the Honourable **HENRY**, Lord **KAMES**: As a Lawyer, Judge, Philosopher, and Country Gentleman, emin-

ent and amiable in every character, of whom occasion has already occurred in these Memoirs to make repeated and honourable mention.

\* **HUME, DAVID, Esq.** : Whose fame as an excellent Historian and profound Philosopher is well known.

**HUTTON, Dr JOHN** : An excellent Chemist and most amiable man ; author of two very ingenious Theories of the cause of Rain, and of the Formation of the present external Crust of our Earth ; which latter, under the name of the Huttonian theory, has excited much notice, and has occasioned much opposition from the disciples of the Wernerian School.

\* **MONRO, Dr ALEXANDER, sen. or rather Primus** : The first efficient Professor of Anatomy and Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, and the corner stone in the foundation of its celebrated School of Medicine ; author of a System of Osteology, which has never been attempted to be rivalled.

**PLUMMER, Dr** : Predecessor of the illustrious Dr BLACK in the chemical chair of the Edinburgh University.

**ROBERTSON, the Rev Dr WILLIAM** : Long Principal of the University of Edinburgh ;

whose unrivalled Historical Works are too universally known and admired to require enumeration in this place.

\***SMITH, Dr ADAM:** Successively Professor of Logic and Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, and afterwards Commissioner of the Customs at Edinburgh ; the illustrious Author of the *Wealth of Nations*, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, and *Considerations on the Formation and Genius of Languages*.

**WILKIE, the Rev Dr WILLIAM:** Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of St Andrews ; Author of an heroic poem called the *Epigoniad*, and of *Fables in verse*.

**WILSON, Dr :** Formerly Professer of Astronomy in the University of Glasgow. This gentleman established many years ago a type foundry in Glasgow, which is still carried on by his family to a considerable extent.

Of the four Essays which are appended to the posthumous volume of *Literary and Characteristical Lives*, by Mr SMELLIE, it may be proper to offer a rapid sketch, without attempting to give any detailed or critical analysis. They were all written when Mr SMELLIE was only twenty years of age, and at a period when his time and attentions must

have been very fully occupied in executing the employment of corrector to the press. The first of these, an *Essay on the Means of Supporting and Promoting Public Spirit*, was written in November 1760; and we learn, from a short preface, that it was intended to enter into competition for a premium, or prize, then offered by the *Select Society* of Edinburgh for the best *Essay* on that subject. Of its success in the competition, or even if it were ever submitted to the judgment of the Society, we have no information.

MR SMELLIE divides his subject into *three* parts. Part *first*, gives a picture of Selfishness as contrasted with Liberality and Public Spirit. Part *second*, of the Education of Children, with a view towards the Cultivation of Public Spirit in their minds. Part *third* endeavours to develope the Means of Promoting Public Spirit, as adapted to the Present Situation of Mankind in Society. The *first* part of this essay, which may rather be considered as an introduction to the subject, paints selfishness as a low and grovelling passion, the origin of every vice, and the bane of society; which, conscious of its own wretched turpitude, is eager to conceal itself

under the mask of virtuous frugality and prudent foresight; while public spirit is defined as “An habitual temper or disposition of mind, which incites the person endowed with it, uniformly to prefer the general advantage to his own private interest, and is held up to admiration as amiable and god-like, expanding its benign influence over all within the sphere of its operation, the parent of every virtue, and the source of universal good.” After all, Mr SMELLIE concedes, that “a discreet and well regulated generosity is the best selfishness;” and perhaps it might not be difficult to shew, with ROCHEFOUCAULT, that public spirit, or patriotism, and all the best virtues of the human mind, proceed from self-love: But the limits necessary to be held in view, on the present occasion, forbid any attempt to prosecute this curious but extraneous topic of investigation. In opening up the subject of the origin of selfishness, Mr SMELLIE takes occasion, rather excusively, to investigate the nature of innate ideas, and of the first sensations of the *fetus in utero*, respecting which he gives a very curious deduction, but for which we must refer to the Essay itself. He sums up this part of his subject by the following conclusion, “That, if there are not such things as *innate ideas*, there

must be ideas which are *connate* at least with existence itself ;” and he deduces from his previous reasoning, “ That selfishness is a gift of nature coeval with our very existence ; which, unless timely pruned by a well regulated culture, will grow up luxuriantly, and over-run the hearts of men,”

FROM this opening of his subject, Mr SMELLIE is led, in the *second* part of this essay, to consider of the best plan of education, so as to regulate and attemper this natural selfishness, and to bend its impulses towards public spirit, or a liberal desire to promote the general good. In this view, he reprobates the ordinary indulgent management of infants, as if “ Mankind had entered into a general combination to train up the tender minds of their offspring by every method which can tend to contract their views, and render them hollow-hearted.” He establishes that we are actuated by mixed motives of sociality and selfishness ; sometimes more purely the one or the other, and sometimes by a combination of both ; while some motives of action appear merely instinctive, and cannot be analyzed into either of these. And, *lastly*, Taking it for granted, that mankind are at least capable of social motives of action, he proceeds

to show how these may be expanded, so as to produce public-spiritedness or disinterested general benevolence. This leads him to a consideration of the proper education of children: *First*, in the early stage of life, before they acquire the use of artificial language: And, *secondly*, how to cultivate public spirit in children, from the infantine stage till they reach the reasoning period of life. On the first of these stages, we can only find room to quote two rules which he lays down for the early management of infants, without attempting to explain his developement of these. 1. That all the attendants of infants should constantly refrain from betraying any selfish motives or actions in their presence. 2. That the natural affection of parents ought to be concealed as far as possible from their children.

RESPECTING the *second* stage in the education of children, intended for cultivating public spirit in their minds, from the infantine to the reasoning period, Mr SMELLIE observes that the subject is of such vast latitude as to require many volumes to treat of it in a manner proportionate to its extent and importance. What he has brought forwards on this subject is of course exceedingly com-

pressed, and hardly admits of farther abridgement ; all that can be introduced, therefore, with propriety on the subject in this place, is, that after shewing the evil tendency of many circumstances in the ordinary management and education of children and youths, Mr SMELLIE sums up the whole in the following conclusion, which we give in his own words. “ A generous public-spirited temper, like true devotion, is only attainable by an habitual contemplation of objects possessed of that valuable quality. To imitate what we naturally admire, or what our minds are frequently conversant about, is a fundamental principle of the human constitution. This principle is most powerful in the morning of life. Of course children should never be permitted to see, hear, or read of actions, the imitation of which can in any degree vitiate their taste or corrupt their hearts.”

MR SMELLIE now proceeds to the *third* and last part of his subject, to consider of the Means of Promoting Public Spirit, as adapted to the present situation of Mankind. After considering the influence of the rulers and great men of a nation on the manners of the people, and strongly urging on them the propriety of setting a good example, in man-

ners and improvements, Mr SMELLIE strongly recommends the erection of societies for propagating and encouraging arts, sciences, agriculture, and manufactures ; and instances the beneficial consequences which have flowed from the exertion of a few such public bodies which then existed in Scotland ; The Commissioners and Trustees for Manufactures and Improvements in Scotland ; The Select Society of Edinburgh, and the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, &c. He proposes, that the men of fortune, in every county in Scotland, should form themselves into separate societies for the encouragement of arts, agriculture, manufactures, and improvements within their own particular counties, by which a spirit of improvement would be diffused in a short time to the farthest bounds of the nation : And it is worthy of remark, that Mr SMELLIE in the year 1760 should have proposed a series of premiums for agricultural improvements, which are now distributing, after a lapse of half a century, by the Highland Society for the very same objects ; such as, for rendering portions of moor or other barren and uncultivated ground fit for the growth of corn, flax, potatoes, turnips, &c.

AFTER this general view of the subject, Mr SMELLIE proceeds to consider several detached circumstances as connected with the Promotion of Public Spirit ; but of which we can take very little more notice than a mere enumeration. These are divided into five sections. I. *On Gaming*; he proposes that the principal noblemen and gentlemen should enter into a general resolution, that all games of hazard shall be laid aside, and esteemed infamous and disgraceful. II. *On Contempt of the Vulgar*; he recommends to all men of fortune to treat the common people with humanity. III. *On Scandal, or False Judgment of Actions*. IV. *On Marriage*, which he recommends as a powerful source of Patriotism, or Public Spirit. V. *On Profanity, or Contempt of Religion*, which he severely reprobates ; and concludes, “ That true Religion and Public Spirit are so intimately connected, that the possession of the former necessarily implies the existence of the latter ; and, therefore, every method ought to be used which can have the remotest tendency to recommend religion and virtue to the esteem and affections of the people.”

OF the other three essays appended to the Literary and Characteristical Lives, it appears only necessary to announce the nature of the subjects. The *first* is an endeavour to investigate the following question : Whether are all Animate and Inanimate Bodies made for the *immediate* use and convenience of Mankind ; or is that only a *secondary* end of their Existence ?” The *second* is likewise the investigation of a question : Whether Oratory, upon the whole, has been of use to Mankind ?” These two essays were read before the Newtonian Society in the year 1762. The *third* and last essay is, “ *Of Poverty*, which Mr SMELLIE sums up with the following excellent maxim. “ It would be a good rule for people of opulence never to solicit their acquaintances to parties of pleasure, or other situations which infer expence, until they are pretty well informed of their conditions.—From mere thoughtlessness, I have known a single young gentleman of fortune beggar numbers of his acquaintances, and oblige them to leave their country and relations to seek subsistence from strangers in a foreign land.”

IN prosecuting this plan of composing a series of lives of Scots authors with whom he had been personally intimate, or connected in business as a printer, although then labouring under a disease, which soon afterwards put a period to his own life, Mr SMELLIE was exceedingly eager and industrious in collecting dates and circumstances. From a number of his letters, which remain on this subject, we have selected a few, as characteristic of that constitutional ardency of mind which always actuated Mr SMELLIE in every one of his literary undertakings. The first of these, addressed to the late Lord GARDENSTONE, is somewhat of an uncommon nature, as expressing a wish that he might be enabled to compose a life of his Lordship in the event of surviving him. What success may have attended this proposal, we are unacquainted with, as no answer from Lord GARDENSTONE, nor any memoranda on this subject, are to be found among Mr SMELLIES papers. This letter is likewise curious, both as explanatory of the occasion and object of writing the life of Lord KAMES, as formerly explained, and as giving an account of the origin of the intention of composing the lives of eminent Scots men, with whom Mr SMELLIE

LIE had been connected in the course of his own literary life, either in habits of intimacy and friendship, or professionally as a printer.

WHEN he died, Mr SMELLIE had begun to write a life of the late Dr ALEXANDER MONRO, Professor of Anatomy in the University of Edinburgh; an eminent person, to whom that University owes much, for having largely contributed to the excellence and high reputation of its medical school, both by his own exertions as a teacher, and by breeding up his son, the present venerable Dr ALEXANDER MONRO, sen. for the express purpose of supporting and extending the celebrity of the University; and it is no flattery to add, that the son has most amply fulfilled the views and hopes of his excellent father, having now filled the anatomical chair in the University of Edinburgh during fifty years, with much and deserved reputation, both as an excellent professor, and an able and extensively employed physician. His son, again, is the *third* ALEXANDER MONRO, in lineal succession, who have reputably filled the anatomical chair during a period of almost 100 years. Of this life of the late Dr ALEXANDER MONRO, four manuscript pages

were found in Mr SMELLIES desk after his death; and this being the very last of his literary efforts, though a mere fragment, is here inserted.

*The Life of the late ALEXANDER MONRO, M.  
D. Professor of Anatomy in the University  
of Edinburgh.*

IN the line of his profession, as well as in the character of a public spirited gentleman, few men have made a more conspicuous figure than Dr ALEXANDER MONRO. He was a descendant of the MONROS of Miltonown; and his grandfather, Sir ALEXANDER MONRO of Beercroft, was one of the first of his name who had the honour of distinguishing himself by his loyalty and patriotism. He was a strenuous opponent to the memorable OLIVER CROMWELL, that strange and hypocritical, but daring and successful usurper. After the restoration, Sir ALEXANDER MONRO took his degree as advocate at the Scottish bar, and was chosen one of the principal clerks of Session. A zealous friend to the liberties of his country, he exerted himself in promoting the revolution; and his eldest son served in

the army under the Prince of Orange. JOHN, Sir ALEXANDER'S youngest son, was educated a surgeon-apothecary, and married his cousin, JEAN FORBES, daughter to a brother of FORBES of Culloden. Of this marriage, several children were produced, who all died young, except ALEXANDER, who was born in London in the year 1697. Three years afterwards, ALEXANDER was carried to Edinburgh by his father, who resided there as a member of the corporation of surgeons. Here MR MONRO was educated; and his father gave him every opportunity of improving in the different branches of medicine, which the Scotch metropolis then afforded. At that period, however, there was no public teaching of Medicine, except a demonstration of the officinal plants by DR PRESTON in summer, and, in winter, a superficial course of chemistry by DR CRAWFORD. The dissection of the human body was only exhibited once in two or three years, by MR ADAM DRUMMOND and MR JOHN MACGILL, who had the denomination of Professors of Medicine in the University.

MR MONRO, in the beginning of the year 1717, went to London, and lodged in the

house of an apothecary, in order to observe the practice of pharmacy, and attended lectures on experimental philosophy delivered by Mr WHISTON and Mr HAWKSBY, and the anatomical demonstrations of Mr CHESELDEN. His chief employment, however, was dissecting the human body, and those of brutes. Several of his dissections he showed to a society of young gentlemen, who, in rotation, gave discourses on the uses of the different organs. In one of these discourses, Mr MONRO first sketched the plan of his *Osteology*, or an account of the bones in general. He made several preparations from the bodies he had dissected, which he transmitted to his father; who gave some of them to the College of Physicians, and to the Company of Surgeons. Mr A. DRUMMOND was so pleased with the progress Mr MONRO had made in anatomy, that he desired his father to encourage the young man in his studies, because he intended to resign in his favour whenever he returned to Edinburgh.

NEXT year, 1718, Mr MONRO went to Paris, where he attended at the Royal Garden a course of Botany given by M. CHOMEL,

and courses of Chemistry and of the Practice of Medicine at the Hotel Dieu and La Charité. He likewise dissected along with M. BOUQUET, performed the operations of surgery under the directions of M. THIBAUT, applied the various bandages according to the method of M. CESSAU, \*\*\*\*\*

## No. CCVIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE *to* Lord GARDENSTON.

MY LORD, *Edin. June 1791.*<sup>4</sup>

I TAKE the liberty of inclosing a short account of your late respectable friend and companion, Lord KAMES. I had the honour of a long and intimate acquaintance with that worthy, great, and ingenious man. A late incident gave me at the same time the greatest disgust and highest pleasure. The Encyclopedia Britannica has a department for biography, a most dangerous and injurious affair, when the characters of illustrious men happen to fall into the hands of petulance and ignorance. This was to have been the fate of Lord KAMES. Some stupid

uninformed fellow had written a most scandalous and false life of his Lordship, which was to have been published in the Encyclopedia. This, however, was luckily discovered by his son, Mr HOME DRUMMOND, who instantly came to town, shewed me the infamous paper, and begged of me to interpose, by drawing up a decent life of his father; with which request I most heartily complied.

I now, my Lord, venture upon ticklish, but I hope not dangerous ground. Upon a certain event, which I most sincerely wish may be very remote, an account of your Lordships public and private transactions will infallibly appear; but who shall undertake the task I know not. If, however, your Lordship will direct me how I can be furnished with proper materials, I shall endeavour to secure your name from misrepresentation, and perhaps from falsehood. I have the honour, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CCIX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Dr JAMES GREGORY.

DEAR DOCTOR, *Edin. March 9. 1795.*

HAVING finished, some months ago, the second and last volume of the *Philosophy of Natural History*, I am now making considerable progress in a new work, namely, *Literary and Characteristical Histories of some Authors with whom I had the honour of being personally acquainted*. Among that number I have ranked your late worthy and ingenuous father. His printed works and life are both before me. But still I am certain that you must know many facts and anecdotes concerning him which never yet appeared publicly, but which would redound to his credit.

Now, Doctor, may I hope for your assistance in promoting my views on this subject? If you do comply with my request, you may be assured that the MS. shall be submitted to

your perusal and correction before the Life is laid before the public. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CCX.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to WILLIAM  
ROBERTSON, *Esq.*

MY DEAR SIR, Edin. Feb. 5. 1795.

I RECEIVED yours respecting my intention, according to a plan I mentioned, of composing, among some other respectable Scottish authors, a biographical account of your late most ingenious father. I am exceedingly sorry that you should have declined my request, because you had already furnished materials to my worthy friend, Mr DUGALD STEWART, for the same purpose. But I beg leave to remark, that Mr STEWARTS account must be in some measure official, as a member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. I mean to write as a private individual; and cannot possibly omit Dr ROBERTSON out of my list.

E e 4

I MEAN not, Sir, to give you much trouble. Jottings of birth, preferments, and his great influence in managing and directing the Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, &c. are all that I require. As for his writings, I shall manage them in my own way. I beg pardon for disturbing you ; and am, respectfully, Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CCXI.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to ANDREW PLUMMER,  
*Esq.*

DEAR SIR, Edin. April 14. 1795.

HAVING finished the second and last volume of my *Philosophy of Natural History*, I have some time ago been advancing with a new work, entitled, *Literary and Characteristic Histories of some Authors with whom I was personally acquainted*. In my list I find the name of your late worthy father. To whom can I apply so properly for materials as to his son ?

THOUGH not sick, I have been confined these five months with weak limbs. I long to hear your bass voice in the Antiquarian lobby, when I shall explain myself more fully. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CCXII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to JOHN HOME, Esq.  
*Author of Douglas, a Tragedy.*

SIR, Edinburgh, 6 Jan. 1795.

I HAVE a favour to ask. Two months ago I finished the MS. of my second and last volume of the *Philosophy of Natural History*, though it is not yet gone to press. But, as I cannot endure the pain of idlenesss, I instantly began a new work, the title of which is to be *Literary and Characteristical Histories of some Authors with whom I was personally acquainted*. To prevent every appearance of predilection, I am to arrange them in the order of the alphabet. I have already finished the life of Lord KAMES, and am nearly done with that of your late most ingenious

and respectable friend, DAVID HUME, Esq. Now, Sir, if you furnish me with any anecdotes concerning this last gentleman, as I wish to make the account as complete as possible, it will highly oblige, Your, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CCXIII.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to DAVID DOUGLAS,  
*Esq. Advocate.*

SIR,

*Edin. Dec. 15 1794.*

THOUGH I am not certain if I have the honour of being your acquaintance, yet I must presume to make the following request.

I HAVE finished the last volume of my *Philosophy of Natural History*; and I am now engaged in composing the *Literary and Characteristical Histories of some Authors with whom I was personally acquainted*. Among these, there are in my list the celebrated Mr DAVID HUME, and the most ingenious Dr ADAM SMITH. I am told that you can give me facts and anecdotes concerning these two great men. If you favour me with any

materials, you will not only oblige me, but the public. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

No. CCXIV.

DAVID DOUGLAS, *Esq.* to Mr WILLIAM  
SMELLIE.

SIR, *Princes Street, 16 Dec. 1794.*

I SHOULD be very happy if it was in my power to give you any materials for the work you mention, which I have no doubt will do credit to yourself and the persons whose characters are recorded in it. But unluckily I had not the honour of being acquainted with Mr DAVID HUME; and the most important particulars relating to Mr SMITH have been already published by Mr D. STEWART in the account of his life and writings read by him before the Royal Society. I am, &c.

DAVID DOUGLAS.

## No. CCXV.

Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to JOHN HOME, *Esq.*

*Castlehill of Edinburgh, January  
16. 1795.*

MR SMELLIES most respectful compliments to Mr HOME.—I received your kind invitation to wait upon you concerning Anecdotes of the late most ingenious, learned, and worthy Mr DAVID HUME. But, alas ! I have not the capacity of receiving that honour. For several months, I have been confined to the house by indisposition, which, however, does not much interrupt my studies. I would not wish that you should take more trouble in this business than suits your inclination and leisure. Mr HUMES *own Life* is well ; but many incidents he passes over in silence, perhaps from his natural modesty, or other motives. Several of these I have added from personal knowledge, not one of which is in the smallest degree derogatory to his reputation. But I am anxious to enrich the account of him from every source to which I can have access. I am, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CCXVI.

DAVID HUME, *Esq. to Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE.*

SIR,         *St Andrews Square, Oct. 20. 1794.*

I RECEIVED yours ; and am sensible to the honour you intend my late uncle, in compiling an account of his life.

ONE thing, however, induces me to make the same return to your application, which I have already made to the like from some other quarters, viz. That my uncle having himself written his Life (which was done in a great measure for the purpose of taking that task out of the hand of others) he has of course said every thing with respect to himself which he thought proper to be communicated to the public. In consequence, his relations cannot, without counteracting his intentions, be the means of publishing any fuller or more particular account. I am, &c.

DAVID HUME.

BEFORE closing the Memoirs of Mr SMELLIE, by an account of his last illness and death, we insert the following letter, written

by him, by the appointment and in the name of the Master Printers of Edinburgh to the Journeymen, from a copy in Mr SMELLIES own hand, but without date.

### No. CCXVII.

GENTLEMEN,

AFTER many fruitless and unnecessary meetings upon the general subject of raising the rates of your wages, without any specific demand, we have at last received long lists of grievances from different houses. These we have repeatedly perused with deliberation and with candor. The demands you make are as various as the houses from which they are sent; the business, of course, is so complicated that, if we were to answer each individual and contradictory article, instead of a few days, many months would be requisite for the laborious and intricate discussion. Besides, some houses have made no demand whatever, but seem to be perfectly satisfied with their present condition. We have, however, to observe, that the rates you wish to establish are beyond measure extravagant: they amount to, at least, one sixth part advance upon the present prices. For

these, and many other reasons, we find ourselves obliged to refuse the introduction of any innovation whatever, and to proceed in the good old way.

You mention that some species of work are less advantageous than others. We allow the fact. But every business carried on by what is called piece-work, instead of days wages, must necessarily be attended with fortuitous advantages and hardships. Here the plea is equal. We have the same title to insist that the lucrative articles are too high, as you have to maintain that the others are too low. This argument receives additional weight when it is considered, that industrious journeymen printers actually make more money than almost any class of men in an equal rank of life. Your earnings, with a moderate degree of economy, will enable you to live more comfortably and more independent than those masters who have no other emoluments than what result from their business.

You have threatened to desert work on Saturday next, if your demands are not complied with. Consider the consequences of such a revolt. It will produce a mutual

injury. It will injure your masters ; but the injury to yourselves will be longer, and much more severely felt. Many of you have wives and children. Can you think of sacrificing them to the capricious or tumultuous passions of young men, who have themselves alone to provide for ? Consider, likewise, that a combination of this kind, succeeded by a revolt, is a crime against society, which will and must protect itself either by gentle or by harsh measures. We know that many of your number wish to retract resolutions which they were induced to adopt by the instigation, or perhaps by the threatenings of clamorous men. But to retract, they imagine to be dishonourable. This notion is as natural as it is common. But when men are led into rash resolutions, which may be destructive to themselves and families, by a false pride, by mere imitation of their companions, or by the heat of passion artificially excited, whenever cool reflection returns, it is both their duty and highly honourable to retract. To repent the commission of folly, and to amend by a more guarded behaviour, is too often necessary in the conduct of human life.

If our ideas, however, should unfortunately not coincide with yours ; if the question,

whether your wages are too high or too low, must be tried ; consider, that it can never be decided by desertion or illegal combination. If you think your situation disagreeable or oppressive, the laws of your country are open for redress. Complain, and you will be heard. Remain peaceably at work till a judge shall determine which of us are in the wrong. Sully not the superiority of your understandings, by imitating the foolish and pernicious conduct of Tailors, Hecklers, and Hammermen.

Signed by an unanimous order of the  
Masters by \*\*\*\*\* Clerk.

MR SMELLIE was much indisposed for a considerable time before his death, and bore his illness with the utmost patience, constantly making this observation, “ That he had resolved in early life to sail down the current of nature without a single murmur.” Of the nature and symptoms of his mortal disorder, we have not received any distinct professional account ; and almost all that is known relative to it is contained in the two subsequent letters to his intimate friends, the ingenious Dr JAMES HUTTON, author of a new Theory of the Earth ; and the respectable Dr JOHN

GARDINER, author of Essays on the Animal Economy, and on various other interesting literary subjects. So far as may be conjectured from these letters, and some slight account of his latter symptoms, his disease seems to have originated in dyspepsia, or indigestion, inducing general debility of his frame, and may perhaps have been occasioned by obstructions in the liver, or some of the other viscera. His constitution, originally excellent, appears to have been worn out with continual sedentary employment, and almost constant anxiety. It may be proper to explain one passage in the following letter to Dr HUTTON: Mr SMELLIE was then printing a work for that gentleman, and felt reluctant to ask an advance of money to account.

## No. CCXVIII.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Dr JAMES HUTTON.*

DEAR DOCTOR, Edinburgh June 20. 1793.

I HAVE been distressed for several months with a feebleness in my limbs and want of

appetite. By advice of your good friend, Dr GARDINER, I took a room at the Citadel of Leith, and bathed my limbs in sea water a very little heated. This is the fourth week since I have observed his prescription ; and for more than a fortnight past I have walked from Leith to Edinburgh every morning, and back every evening, and my appetite is now decent. I am exceedingly happy to hear that your health continues good.

Now for the Devil, who is like to stick both in my throat and my pen ; an hundred pounds would greatly aid the operation of exercise and bathing, by removing some loads that lie heavy on my stomach.

GOOD GOD ! is DUGALD STEWART really dead ? I heard so to-day. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

## No. CCXIX.

*Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE to Dr JOHN GARDINER.*

DEAR DOCTOR, *Edinburgh, 31 May 1794.*

I NEVER wrote a medical case before ; but I now find myself obliged to write my own case, which I shall do in a few words.

EVERY morning, as soon as I rise, I reach violently, and throw up nothing but phlegm and bile. But, within these few days, I play the same trick three or four times a-day. After this, I need not tell you that I am no glutton. On the contrary, the sight, or even the mentioning of food, nauseates me. The consequence of all these operations is, that my former debilitated limbs are hardly able to support my small tabernacle. My drink is port, or rather port and water.

Now for the reverse of the medal. I sleep long and well, and dream very little.—My good Lord Doctor deliver me from this evil, and I shall ever pray. Yours, &c.

WILLIAM SMELLIE.

N. B. Of my own accord, I have this day infused an ounce of bark, with some rhubarb and orange peel ; but shall not use it, if you forbid me. My bowels do their duty pretty decently.

His disorder, whatever it was, gained ground in spite of every medical aid ; and he expired, after a long illness, on the 24th of June 1795, aged fifty-five ; and immediately afterwards the following short notice appeared in all the Edinburgh newspapers.

“ On the 24th of this month, died here of a long and painful illness, which he endured with uninterrupted steadiness and uncommon fortitude, Mr WILLIAM SMELLIE, Printer, Secretary of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, Author of the Philosophy of Natural History, Translator of the celebrated BUFFON, &c. &c. Soon after the invention of printing, those who followed the profession were justly held in high estimation among the scholars of their time. The art, however, fell gradually into the hands of others, who, regardless of the composition of the books they printed, were solely bent upon the mechanical adjustment of the types.

Mr SMELLIE, it may be with truth asserted, was none of the latter description. We trust, for the honour of so noble an art, he is not doomed to be the last of the learned printers that Europe is to experience. He was honoured with the friendship and intimate acquaintance of most of the literati of his time, such as the late DAVID HUME, Esq. Lord KAMES, Dr ADAM SMITH, Lord HAILES, and many other men of genius still living. His reading was extensive, his memory tenacious, his penetration acute. Unbiassed by prejudice, he never deviated in his sentiments of men or books from the strictest candour. As in science he despised all affectation or adscititious ornament himself, so he easily saw through these in others ; and the promptitude of his language rarely failed to express his ideas with precision. His tender and parental care in rearing a numerous family must for ever endear his memory to them ; while his uncommon talent for conversation, serious or gay, his social disposition, and undissembled freedom of sentiment, will long be remembered by a large and respectable circle of friends and acquaintances."

Mr SMELLIE was about the middle size, and had been in his youth well looked and active ; but when rather passed the middle of life, he had acquired, from almost constant stooping at his desk to write or correct, a rather lounging gait and appearance ; and from a long continued series of difficulties in his affairs, and much disappointment in matters of affectionate moment, he had become careless and rather slovenly in his dress and appearance ; wearing his hair long and bushy, his ordinary black and wide made clothes ill brushed, and well sprinkled with snuff, and his usual old-fashioned cocked hat for the most part rusty. This appearance is well described in a few extempore lines written by the poet BURNS, upon his appearance at a club formerly mentioned, called the *Croch-allan Fencibles*, composed of many very respectable literary men, some of whom were rather choice spirits, and to which club Mr SMELLIE had introduced Mr BURNS. This effusion is printed in BURNS'S works, but may very properly be introduced in this place, in reference to Mr SMELLIE'S character and appearance.

*A Fragment.*

— — — — — “ To Crochallan came  
The old cock'd hat, the brown surtout, the same ;  
His bristling beard just rising in its might,  
('Twas four long nights and days to shaving-night;) ;  
His uncomb'd grizzly locks wild staring, thatch'd  
A head, for thought profound and clear, unmatch'd ;  
And, tho' his caustic wit was biting, rude,  
His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.”

THE following picture of MR SMELLIE from the same pen, as drawn by BURNS in a letter to MR PETER HILL bookseller in Edinburgh, is so characteristic of both the painter and the subject, that, though likewise printed in the works of that eminent poet, it deserves to be inserted in this place. The letter accompanied a present of cheese.

## No. CCXX.

*From ROBERT BURNS to Mr PETER HILL.*

DEAR SIR,

“ I KNOW that you are no niggard of your good things among your friends, and some of

them are much in need of a slice. There in my eye is our friend SMELLIE; a man positively of the first abilities and greatest strength of mind, as well as one of the best hearts and keenest wits that I have ever met with. When you see him, as alas ! he too is smarting at the pinch of distressful circumstances, aggravated by the sneer of contumelious Greatness!—a bit of my cheese alone will not cure him ; but if you add a tankard of brown stout, and superadd a magnum of right Oporto, you will see his sorrows vanish like the morning mist before the summer sun ! I am,” &c.

ROBERT BURNS.

AFTER the glowing descriptions by BURNS, both in poetry and prose, it were superfluous to repeat, that Mr SMELLIES talents for social converse were of the first rate kind; and though his wit, as forcibly expressed by that excellent judge of wit, was often keen and biting, yet such was his candid suavity of manner that it could never give offence, except to fools and men of diseased and jealous irritability of temper. One species of playful humour in which he often indulged, and with much

readiness, was punning ; which some fastidious critics have been pleased to call the very lowest species of wit, though it certainly has one excellent property, that it invariably occasions much innocent mirth and good humour.

In grave and philosophical discourse, he was clear, candid, communicative, and informing, as well as thoroughly informed ; never withholding his judgment and opinions from narrow mindedness, or obtruding them unnecessarily or ill-timedly from vanity or affectation. On every occasion, his friends and acquaintances were welcome to his advice and assistance on all subjects with which he was familiar, and there were few subjects in literature or philosophy in which he was not more than ordinarily versant, and in many, profoundly learned.

His manners were uncommonly mild, inoffensive, and gentle ; insomuch that none, even of his own family, ever remember to have seen him out of temper, and he probably never was in a passion in the whole course of his life ; even in his last and long illness he was never in the smallest degree peevish,

fretful, or melancholy. That he had his faults is certain, for who can be without them? But they were all against himself, and never injured others. To his family he was ever kind and indulgent; and all his friendships were warm and lasting.

LIKE many other learned men, his opinions in religion and philosophy have occasionally been misrepresented by bigots. He was fully convinced of the existence of a Supreme Being; and this, perhaps, was the only subject on which his usual serenity was ever ruffled, as he had no patience with any one who ventured to argue against the being of God. He never expressed any doubts or dread respecting his situation in a future life, of which he was thoroughly assured; yet used sometimes to remark, and strongly too, "That he wished to God there never had been such a word pronounced as *ANNIHILATION*; for, if he had any dread at all, it lay there."

Of his particular opinions in regard to religious doctrines and forms, on which many good and wise men have disputed almost with rancour, and seldom in the spirit

of charity, the writer of these Memoirs, though several years intimately acquainted with him, is not at all instructed ; but the following pious sentiment, with which he closes the first volume of his Philosophy of Natural History, is so just and excellent that it would have been unpardonable to have omitted it on this occasion.—“ *Let Man be contented. His station in the universal scale of Nature is fixed by Wisdom. Let him contemplate and admire the works of his CREATOR ; let him fill up his rank with dignity, and consider every partial evil as a cause or an effect of general good.*” His philosophical opinions are before the public, and many of them have been noticed in the preceding pages.

As a Translator of the works of BUFFON, he is always excellent ; for he was perfectly acquainted with the subject, and has uniformly conveyed the meaning of his author in clear and appropriate language. In his own original compositions, though he may not dazzle the imaginations of his readers by warmth and animation of style and language, he is always judicious and instructive, and his language is perspicuous and dignified, without any attempt at false eloquence, or tawdry or-

nament. Somewhat in the language used by himself, in the close of his life of the late amiable, ingenious, and most respectable Dr JOHN GREGORY, it may be said, That as a man of various and extensive literary and scientific attainments, and as considered in a professional view, few men will be found to have excelled the late WILLIAM SMELLIE.

THE END.



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